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North & West edition No 729

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Death of Mike O'Brien upsets all political sides

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Parents, not kids, behind the great uniform fiasco

FOR many people, school carries with it some cherished memories; of life-long friends, japes and scrapes, and a whole host of ideals which help oil the wheels of society.

They are communities in their own rights which require their own set of rules and guidelines in order for everyone to gain what they need; for teachers to impart knowledge and for the pupils to absorb the information to help it shape their own individual goals and ambitions, supported by parents who want to see their children exceed their own life achievements.

Or, at least, that's the aim.

The problem is that, for a minority, that message never really sinks in. And for whatever reason they emerge from full-time education in the real world and an unhealthy disrespect for mechanisms designed to improve people.

Let us be under no illusions here. The problems seen at a Margate school this week where police had to be called after its new head teacher came good on his zero-tolerance approach to uniform vow and led to some 50 being turned back from the gates, was not caused simply by unruly children, but a toxic blend of that and parents failing to act in a responsible, adult, manner.

A uniform does not prevent a child learning or progressing. But it does introduce an order, a focus and a pride in the community which starts and ends with the school bell each day. It puts everyone on a level playing field, regardless of income or perceived class. It is a basic sign of buying into your education community for the benefit of everyone.

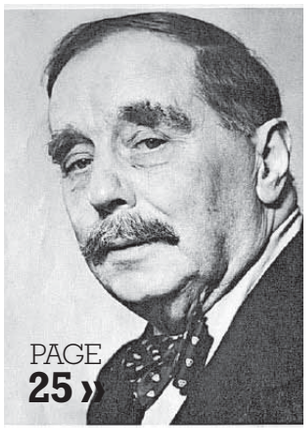
While the focus is so often on failing schools and teachers, perhaps more attention should be paid to the parents who set the worse type of example.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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School in uniform row says standards on the up

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk



STRICT: Matthew Tate hopes a strict uniform policy will raise expectations and standards

EXECUTIVE head of the school at the centre of a row over school uniform, which left 50 children turned away when term started this week, says opposing its policy is undermining a desire to better the lives of the children who attend.

And he insists the new approach is already paying dividends in the classroom.

Hartsdown Academy made national headlines after new head Matthew Tate stood firm on his zero-tolerance policy of abuse of the school's uniform rules.

And that meant pupils wearing trainers or hoodies were told to go home and change before being let in. Furious parents protested, and police were forced to attend.

But Paul Luxmore, executive head teacher of the Coastal Academies Trust which operates the school, insists this is just the first step in a concerted effort to drag up school standards.

He told KoS: "Margate is known for high unemployment and poverty. And Hartsdown is known for having deprived children and low academic standards. We think the pupils are sick of being seen as the poor children of Thanet and that they have high aspirations and want to do well. Matthew bringing in this school uniform is the beginning of pulling the school's standards up.

"We were not saying pupils cannot come to school but simply that if they are wearing the wrong uniform to go home, change, and come back. We want them to be in class. Most schools enforce a uniform and that is all Matthew has been doing.

"Because of Matthew's strict stance on uniform, the pupils realise he means what he says and will enforce the rules put in place at the school. Because of this in the first week we have been back, behaviour in the classroom has improved and pupils seem more settled compared to last year.

"The pupils of Hartsdown need a head who will enforce the rules."

One parent, Latasha Whiting, wrote on Facebook her 15-year-old daughter was turned away for not wearing an appropriate school skirt.

She believed the crackdown stemmed from a headteacher intent on making an impact in his first few days in the job, adding: "Sorry, wrong kind of impact in my mind."

The school has informed parents a supplier has all the uniform needed in stock, including blazers priced at £27, skirts at £11.95 and trousers between £13-16.

Grammar expansion could herald boom in county's selectives

A GROUP opposed to the expansion of grammar schools has hit out at the government's plans, revealed on Friday, for a new wave of selectives.

Kent is one of the few authorities which currently operates a selective system – with around 10,000 students sitting the Kent Test this week. It determines if a child is suitable for a grammar school place.

But after much speculation, on Friday prime minister Theresa May confirmed the ban on new grammars, imposed in 1998 by Tony Blair's Labour government would be lifted. And that could mean expansion plans by a number of Kent grammars could now get the nod.

With work already under way for a grammar annexe of Tonbridge's Weald of Kent girls' grammar in Sevenoaks, the likes of Canterbury's Barton Court has also expressed interest in opening up a site to serve the district's coastal towns in Whitstable and Herne Bay. And more are likely to follow suit.

Speaking in London, the MP said: "It is not a proposal to go back to the 1950s, but to look to the future, and that future I believe is an exciting one. It is a future in which every child should have access to a good school place. And a future in which Britain's education system shifts decisively to support ordinary working class families."

Mrs May confirmed she wants to relax restrictions which prevent the creation of new selective schools, the expansion of existing ones or the conversion of non-selective schools into grammars. It was "completely illogical to make it illegal to open good new schools", she said. "It's about what parents want locally,"

However, Joanne Bartley, of the Kent Education Network, a group opposed to selective education, told us: "Passing a test shouldn't give you a better school – it's not fair."

Kent County Council has previously spoken in support of new grammar schools.

Relief on the rails as rebuilt sea wall reopens closed line

RAIL travellers were able to use services between Folkestone and Dover again this week - for the first time since the line was completely closed last Christmas due to damage to the sea wall.

Services resumed on Monday - months ahead of schedule. It is part of a £39.8 million project being carried out by Network Rail, which handles rail infrastructure, to rebuild the damaged wall.

David Statham, managing director of Southeastern, said: ''Our services are critical to both passengers and businesses in this area; so I am really pleased that we're now able to get our trains back on track more than two months ahead of schedule.''

In nine months engineers have built a new 235 metre-long viaduct.

Cyclist secures first gold in Paralympic Games in Rio

A 31-year-old cyclist from a village near Ashford kick-started the Team GB gold rush at the Rio Paralympics this week.

Megan Giglia took gold in the C1-3 individual pursuit.

The 31-year-old from Mersham, near Ashford, beat American Jamie Whitmore on Thursday's opening day of action, catching up with her at the 1,777 yards mark resulting in an automatic win.

The inspirational cyclist suffered a stroke in 2013, which left her with a brain haemorrhage and paralysis to the right side of her body.

■ For full details and reaction, turn to the sports pages in this weekend's edition of Kent on Sunday.

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Station shift idea as part of regeneration plans

SWANLEY railway station could be moved closer to the town centre as part of a major multi-million pound regeneration plan.

The proposals are included in Sevenoaks District Council's 20-year 'master vision' to develop both Swanley and neighbouring Hextable.

A consultation on the report will now run until November 2. Peter Fleming, Sevenoaks District Council's leader, said: ''This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to massively improve facilities in Swanley town centre, protect the distinctiveness of Hextable and surrounding villages and to give residents and business a town that retains its strong sense of community.''

MP returns to work after setting himself alight in 'stupid' bonfire accident

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A KENT MP is back at work this week more than a month after suffering severe burns in a freak bonfire accident.

Gordon Henderson, who representative Sittingbourne and Sheppey, confirmed on Monday he was back in Westminster after the summer recess, ready for his first full day back since the accident in July.

Speaking about the incident, which saw him admitted to a specialist unit at an East Grinstead hospital, he explained how fumes exploded during one of his "regular" bonfires.

"Because the fire was contained on three sides the exploding fumes had nowhere to go, except forward - towards me," he said.

"It was a scary moment. My hair caught fire and I was badly burned on my face, back, sides, chest, both arms and right leg.

"In fact, my left leg was the only part of my body to escape relatively unscathed.



BURNS: Gordon Henderson

"Thankfully, there was a hosepipe close by and my wife, Louise, had the good sense to immediately douse me with water for 10 minutes.

"If she had not taken such immediate action then I might well be dead, and that is not being over dramatic."

After initially being taken to Sheppey Community Hospital, Mr Henderson was then flown to Tunbridge Wells Hospital via the Kent Air Ambulance before then being transferred to Queen Victoria in East Grinstead.

"It appears that I sustained burns on 30 per cent of my body, although, once again, I was lucky," he said.

"My burns were deemed 'superficial', in as much that no skin grafts were needed, although, apparently, such wounds are the most painful because they affect surface nerves.

"One fact I was surprised to learn from staff in East Grinstead, was that many of the burns they treat are petrol related.

"It appears that I am not the only stupid fool who uses petrol to start bonfires.

"And, believe me, my action was foolish and is not something I will be doing again. Ever."



HELICOPTER: As flown in the raid

Chopper drug gang hit with big jail terms

THREE members of an organised crime group who tried to fly class A drugs worth around £12 million into the UK – including making an unscheduled stop in a village near Maidstone – have been given prison sentences totalling 52 years.

When the group's rented helicopter flew from Belgium into Redhill Aerodrome in Surrey on April 21 this year it was being tracked as part of an investigation involving the National Crime Agency, Metropolitan Police, Border Force, and the Dutch and Belgian authorities.

The pilot, who was taking flying lessons in the UK and had booked one for later the same day, dropped under radar coverage deliberately and made an unscheduled stop in the Yalding area, before resuming the journey.

Shortly after he landed at Redhill, both the Dutch pilot and passenger were arrested. At the same time, a BMW known to be in the Yalding area at the time of the touchdown was pulled over on the M26 and a man from London also arrested. In the boot were 43 kilos of cocaine and 60 kilos of heroin.

All three men pleaded guilty to conspiring to import class A drugs at Croydon Crown Court on Friday. The Dutch duo got 18 years each, the London man 16 years.

Accused pleas not guilty to PC murder

ITALIAN Stefano Brizzi, 50, has denied murdering a Greenhithe policeman he is accused of strangling and dismembering after meeting on gay dating website Grindr.

Appearing at the Old Bailey via video-link from Belmash Prison on Friday morning, the court heard it is alleged he killed 59-year-old PC Gordon Semple at his London flat some time between April 1 and April 7.

The officer went missing on April 1 and his remains were discovered a week later after a neighbour alerted Scotland Yard to a ''smell of death'' coming from a property on the Peabody Estate in Southwark Street, south London.

Mr Semple was originally from Inverness in Scotland and had been with the Metropolitan Police for 30 years.

Mr Brizzi pleaded not guilty to one court of murder. A provisional trial date was set for October 18. The case is expected to last three days.

Young people dabble online in the 'dark net'

RESEARCH by the University of Kent has revealed five per cent of British adults has browsed the so-called 'dark net' - seen as the unregulated version of the internet.

But its cyber security centre said among 18-24-year-olds, the percentage rose to 14 per cent.

The survey, now in its third year, also revealed at least four per cent of British adults have been victims of ransomware, where their computer has had malware installed, which encrypts their data and then faced demands for a payment to restore it back to normal. Of those polled, 26 per cent paid the ransom – though even after they complied with the criminals' demands, 35 per cent of them never recovered their data

When it comes to data breaches, it is the older age group that wants the toughest penalties imposed. Approximately 40 per cent of British adults agree with companies suffering the breach paying larger fines, with the users affected receiving significant compensation. They believe the government should do more to prevent data breaches in companies.

Southern Water hit with £57,000 fine

SOUTHERN Water has been ordered to pay more than £57,000 after breaching conditions set out in its environmental permit in Tunbridge Wells.

An investigation by the Environment Agency found the company had exceeded conditions allowing it to discharge treated sewage from its Tunbridge Wells North works to the Somerhill stream between July 2013 and July 2014.

Southern Water pleaded guilty to the charges under environmental permitting regulations 2010.

In mitigation, Southern Water stated it had already spent £360,000 on improvement to the treatment works and a further £6m was planned for the future.

David Willis, at the Environment Agency, said: ''We take these incidents very seriously and do everything within our powers to safeguard the environment and people that may be affected.

''We expect companies to take all necessary actions to comply with the conditions set out in Environmental Permits and welcome Southern Water's commitment to spend a further £6m on planned improvement works.''

Glowing tributes paid after death of Tory stalwart O'Brien

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

TRIBUTES have been paid to Medway Council's Mike O'Brien, who passed away on Thursday night.

The long-time Conservative councillor was portfolio holder for children and young people and a well known and well respected figure at the unitary authority.

It is known he had been suffering from a long term illness.

First elected to Gillingham Borough Council in 1976 and a former Kent County Council councillor, he also founded his own insurance and finance brokerage in Rainham.

He had represented the Rainham Central ward since 2007 and was previously a lecturer at Canterbury College as well as a magistrate.

Leader of Medway Council Alan Jarrett said: "He was a wonderful friend to all and an outstanding and dedicated councillor and cabinet member, who I and fellow councillors thoroughly enjoyed working with.

"Mike was incredibly committed to his children's services portfolio and despite his illness over recent months he continued to work. I enjoyed visiting him at his home to update him on council business and to catch up with a good friend.

"Over the years Mike achieved many things, but his biggest passion was by far his family – his wife Sheila, two children and six grandchildren.

"I will miss him tremendously, as will all who had the pleasure of working with him."

Dan McDonald, Labour councillor for Gillingham South Ward and a friend of Cllr O'Brien, said: "Mike and I may have been on different sides of the political spectrum but he was somebody who always supported me in a professional and personal capacity and I thank him for that.

"He was an inspirational community ambassador who always sought to put his residents in Rainham Central above all else. He was a gentleman who was taken far too soon and I know that councillors from all sides of the chamber will join me in sending their best wishes to Sheila and his family."

Labour group leader, Vince Maple, added: "The council chamber will be a lesser place without Mike's wit and strong debating style."



RIP: Final farewell to Medway Council's Mike O'Brien

Festival confirms it will be back in 2017

ORGANISERS of the New Day Festival have confirmed the 2017 event will return to Faversham for the second year running.

This summer's festival across the weekend of August 5-7 featured the likes of Jethro Tull frontman Ian Anderson, Wilko Johnson and The Stranglers.

Next year's event will take place across August 25-27 at Mount Ephraim in Hernehill.

Alert after children playing in the sea

A MASSIVE search and rescue operation swung into force on Monday after two children were feared dragged into the sea after playing in the water near the Allhallows Caravan Holiday Park at around 5.15pm.

The teams were stood down after the youngsters were reported safe and well.

Students unveil mural

STUDENTS from Canterbury College's art department got a boost after their work was displayed in a prominent place in the city.

They worked alongside top street artist Greg Stobbs to create a large new mural for Love Lane. It formed part of their developing opportunities course. The site of the new street mural had previously been neglected.



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Ferry industry praises vow to dismantle 'the jungle'

THE county's major ferry company operators say they "unequivocally welcome" plans for the migrant camp in Calais known as 'the jungle' to be pulled down.

Ferry firms P&O and DFDS and the Port of Dover issued a joint statement following a recent announcement by the French interior minister that it will be removed "as soon as possible".

It said: "We unequivocally welcome the announcement. The priority now is to ensure that the camp is closed as quickly, efficiently and humanely as possible with the inhabitants relocated to alternative accommodation away from major international ports.

"Everyone who travels through the Port of Calais has a right to a fluid, safe and secure journey,



ensuring people and goods keep moving. We will continue to work closely with the French government to ensure that the Channel ports remain open for business and that the current situation is not allowed to recur, something which is in the vital interests of millions of tourists, hundreds of thousands of importers and exporters, and the national economies of Britain and France."

Brands Hatch boss wants to buy Silverstone circuit

THE owner of Brands Hatch has admitted he is "very interested" in extending his motorsport empire further by buying Silverstone.

Home of the British Grand Prix, purchase of the track would mean MotorSport Vision, of which former F1 racer Jonathan Palmer is chief executive, would then own a total of five circuits, including the Kent track.

Silverstone is currently owned by the British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC), but members voted to sell its 249-year lease to Jaguar Land Rover in April, as it struggles to come to terms with financial losses of more than £50m experienced in 2012.

However, it is understood the deal has stalled and Mr Palmer is now geared up to step in and submitting a bid of his own.

"We are definitely interested in making an offer for Silverstone and have a lot of confidence in our ability to bring a great deal of stability to it and a vision for the future," Mr Palmer said this week.

"The BRDC hasn't approached me at all but I've told them that I certainly want the opportunity to be invited to put a deal forward. I have said before that MSV would be interested in running Silverstone."

Brands Hatch won the rights to host the F1 Grand Prix in 1999 but former owners Octagon failed to secure the relevant permissions – and instead allowed Silverstone to be the British Grand Prix host.

Maidstone's Mela magic

THE Maidstone Mela takes place across the town centre today (Sunday).

Offering music, food and dance from around the world, the event celebrates Britain's multi-cultural community.

Previously staged at Mote Park, it is hoped the move will broaden its appeal.

Road safety campaign

KENT County Council has launched its Share the Road safety campaign aimed at reducing the number of those killed or injured on Kent's roads.

In 2015, almost 6,000 people were killed or injured on Kent's roads and the campaign will focus on positive steps to stay safe.

Demelza's big fun day

CHILDREN's hospice Demelza throws opens the doors of its Bobbing site, near Sittingbourne, later this month.

The children's community fun day will take place on Sunday, September 25, with activities for all ages and the opportunity to raise money for the vital service.

Park's £25k cash boost

FUNDRAISING for a new play area in Tunbridge Wells' Calverly Grounds has been boosted by a £25,000 grant.

The cash comes from ethical funding organisation, the SUEZ Communities Trust.

It brings the total raised to £55,000 and brings the adventure park closer to reality.



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Top Three Stories



1. Council worker jailed

He stole £2,000 worth of council tax

2. Second uniform row

Parent 'humiliated' by schoolbag row

3. Bakers going strong

Kent duo remain in Great British Bake Off

The Essential Guide:



...to the Dartford Crossing

Everything you need to know about the river crossing linking Kent with Essex.



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Watch as a chimney the height of 55-stacked double-decker buses collapses during Wednesday's demolition. Or take a look at some of the pictures from the day by turning to page 16 of this week's paper.

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Top Three Blogs



1. Get tough on pollution

Time for crack down after link to Alzheimers

2. Straight outta uni

A journey from university to the real world

3. Don't tell the bride

One man's addiction to reality TV

Results of the *KoS* Online Poll

How should our grammar prospects be tested?

1. They shouldn't be tested at all - 19%
2. Use Sats results - 41%
3. Move the date of the Kent Test - 26%
4. The Kent Test is fine as it is - 14%

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Brexit – the die is cast but calls grow for more 'clarity'

Kent firms join chorus of calls for more information on just how a world when we have left the European is going to look as negotiations set to get under way

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk

THE county's business leaders are demanding clarity on Brexit negotiations in a bid to ease concerns over the future economic picture for the nation.

Seven weeks after the UK voted to leave the European Union, the House of Commons returned this week to start plotting exactly how to negotiate its way out.

But as prime minister Theresa May started to formulate her negotiating position, a survey conducted by the British Chamber of Commerce – which included contributions from Kent members – revealed staffing concerns are beginning to raise their heads.

The national survey quizzed more than 800 businesses who employ EU staff, with over two fifths reporting their EU employees have expressed concern over their future residency status.

A key Brexit negotiation plank will be whether EU citizens living and working here will be able to remain. The government is keen to ensure that, but it will need an agreement in place that allows UK ex-pats similar rights in other EU countries.

Jo James, chief executive of Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, explained: "These survey results are true of Kent as well.

"In this area we had a good level of response from businesses and it seems their main concern is around EU workers."

The survey found 41 per cent of companies that employ EU workers have EU staff that express uncertainty over their future residency status; five per cent of businesses that employ EU workers have seen EU employees resign following the vote; 10 per cent of businesses have seen their EU employees state their intention to leave the UK; and 60 per cent of businesses surveyed think residency guarantees for EU workers would have a positive impact on their business.

Kent is particularly dependent on a migrant workforce in key areas such as agriculture and health care.

The formal process of leaving the EU has not yet been triggered. Theresa May insists article 50 will only be implemented once she and her cabinet is convinced it can achieve the best possible position for the country. That process is expected to take around two years.

"EU workers are vital to the growth of the county, especially in sectors such as tourism and education, it is concerning. What will their status be?" asks Ms James.

"What if businesses take on EU workers now? Will they have to leave? Kent businesses need clarity."

The concerns over economic uncertainty was a key one for the Remain camp which repeatedly hammered home messages of concern.

This week Bank of England governor Mark Carney rejected criticism the central bank overcooked warnings of a hit to the economy despite signs that the downturn will be shallow.

He came under fire from Brexit campaigners but Mr Carney said that he was "absolutely serene" about the bank's warnings of a possible downturn in the economy.

Conservative MP for Dartford, Gareth Johnson, who voted for Brexit, said: "There is every reason to be optimistic about the future of the British economy when we leave the EU.

"Many of the dire and gloomy predictions we heard during the referendum campaign have simply not materialised. Improved retail sales show that confidence remains on the high street and exporters have benefitted from the current exchange rate."

However, it is becoming increasingly clear that while business is prepared to remain hopeful during this period before article 50 is triggered, it does so on faith rather than any sense of certainty.

Kevin Thorp is operations director at Dover's Majestic International Freight Forwarding. He sums up the situation: "We haven't seen a lot of change. I can't say we have too much anticipation as to the future yet because until we know what's going to happen there's not much we can say or do."

James Hookman is deputy chief executive for the Freight Transport Association. He says: "We have seen no immediate impact but there has been a lot of speculation and uncertainty about the effect of Brexit on our industry.

"Access to the single market is a key issue for our members as Britain's trade with the EU is worth £360 billion and we plan to ensure transport and logistics is high on the agenda when discussions are taking place."

This week, returning to the Commons after the summer recess, the prime minister faced accusations of vagueness and contradiction over the government's position on remaining in the European single market.

Theresa May said she is seeking "the right deal" on trade in goods and services after Britain opted to withdraw from the EU but added "we will not take decisions until we are ready. We will not reveal our hand prematurely and we will not provide a running commentary on every twist and turn of the negotiations."

This received criticism from Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn who accused the government of issuing "contradictory messages" on Brexit which were exacerbating "huge uncertainty" about the UK's future.

But the issue of migrant workers should not be underestimated in the county.

Tory MP, Gareth Johnson added: "Theresa May has been clear about immigration and indicated that she wants EU citizens currently living in Britain to be able to remain but is reserving any decision for negotiations."

But at the University of Greenwich's Medway campus, a spokesman expressed concerns. They, like other higher education establishments have long-term concerns over funding and changes to international relations.

They told KoS: "Many EU nationals, and those from other parts of the globe choose to work and study at our Medway campus, playing an integral part in the life of the south east and contributing to its economic success.

"International numbers at Greenwich, particularly EU nationals, have so far remained steady since the announcement of Brexit. We do not expect to see an immediate impact on these numbers but we will be monitoring this as the government moves further into the official changes.

"Meanwhile, Eu nationals are, and will remain, valued members of our community. Recruitment of EU students is going ahead as normal for this year."

Other key sectors of the county's economy are also awaiting clarity going forward.

Kent Invicta Chamber chief Jo James explains: "Each sector has different strengths, farming and fishing are big parts of our county, how will their subsidies be affected?

"At the moment farming is benefitting from EU subsidies. The government needs to give positive messages and to show that they are committed to business growth."

Among those seeking a boost will be the fishing industry which has long been frustrated by EU-imposed restrictions.

Ms James added: "With the EU, fishing started to decline because of restrictions put in place by the EU parliament. Hopefully the fishing industry can take Brexit as an opportunity to restore them to their former glory."

A representative from the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations has spoken about their negotiation aims, which have taken place in the House of Lords this week, and said "Brexit offers an opportunity but it is not without its risks for the fishing industry.

"Fisheries will form an important strand - but only one strand - within the Brexit negotiations with the EU.

"It will be important to ensure that fishing in Kent is given the priority that it deserves and the way to do that will be to ensure our priorities are reflected in clear and cohesive negotiating positions."

Tourism is also taking a wait and see approach, despite concerns over international terrorism likely to have driven up rates of the staycation this summer – with families opting to remain in the UK rather than travel abroad.

Conservative MP for South Thanet, Craig MacKinlay said "The summer was slow to get started but staycations have been beneficial for the tourism industry and for local businesses. It will be better round the corner. Businesses need to go out and get the new business, there's no reason for Brexit to have caused a change."



WAITING GAME: Business leaders are demanding more clarity on issues such as migrant workers and funding

Bid begins to raise £7.1m to keep Churchill valuables at Chartwell

National Trust is in talks with the great-grandson of the wartime leader in a bid to secure a whole host of items and keep them on display at the home which meant so much to him in Westerham...

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk



SHOW: From a miniature box of paints to his Nobel Prize, it is hoped the funds will be raised to secure them

A £7.1 million appeal has been launched to buy and showcase personal possessions of Sir Winston Churchill at his Kent home.

The legendary wartime leader, frequently voted the most influential individual of the 20th century in Britain, lived and worked on his sprawling Chartwell estate at Westerham.

Now owned by the National Trust, hundreds of thousands of visitors come to see where the great man spent so much of his time both during war and peace time.

And while the trust also owns around half of the items displayed in the house, many others are on a long-term 'loan' from Churchill's family.

Now his great-grandson, Randolph Churchill, is in talks with the trust about them acquiring more.

And that would mean many get to stay and live on in Chartwell for generations to come.

Among the objects of historic and cultural importance are his Nobel Prize in literature which was awarded to Churchill in 1953 for his iconic speeches, many of which were written at Chartwell; his wooden speech box which contained notes from advisers that he could transform into his speeches; a House of Commons birthday book which was signed by almost every member of the House of Commons and presented to Churchill on his 80th birthday in 1954; a miniature paint box – he once said: "If I weren't painting, I couldn't live"; his collection of medallions which reflect a long and varied life and career; a pair of hairbrushes which are made from the deck of the Second World War ship HMS Exeter; his armchair given to him as part of his Freedom Award from the people of Brighton in 1947; a painting of the port of Antwerp which was given to him as part of the freedom of the city award from the people of Antwerp; and a sculpture of a lion from the people of Luxembourg as he regularly used the symbol of a lion in his speeches.

Now the National Trust is hoping to generate sufficient donations to allow it to make a bid and keep the treasures in the county.

Katherine Barnett, Chartwell's house and collections manager, said: "This collection of objects represents a lifetime of endeavours and achievements by one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century.

"These objects, many of which are displayed in the very places Churchill himself used them, are completely unique and without them our ability to tell the story of Churchill's life would be diminished.

"His Nobel Prize, for example, is on display just a few feet from the very room where he would stride up and down through the night, dictating to one of his secretaries with a flow of words, many of which have become ingrained in our culture and are now among the most famous phrases in our language.

"The design for the presentation volume accompanying the prize illustrates themes that were known to be close to Churchill's heart, and in pride of place is a picture of Chartwell, the home he loved."

Historian and author, professor Sir David Cannadine, also stresses the importance of acquiring Churchill's items. He explained: "The National Trust's important and imaginative plans for Chartwell's future will ensure that Sir Winston Churchill's lasting and exceptional legacy will continue to inspire visitors from Britain and around the world for generations to come.

"The more that Churchill's life recedes into history, the more important places like Chartwell become. It offers an opportunity we, the public, so rarely have – to immerse ourselves in the private world of one of the 20th century's greatest figures. It is through Chartwell and its profoundly personal collection that we can most vividly and most memorably come to know this extraordinary man."



The project, Churchill's Chartwell, hopes to acquire the possessions in the hope they will provide inspiration for a new interpretation and engagement programme that will unlock Chartwell's fascinating stories and transform how the public learn from this special place and these unique objects.

Following on from the acquisition the National Trust hope to be able to bring audio interpretation and soundscapes to Chartwell, as inspired by the great orator himself.

The trust also intend to give the public access to some of the most personal family spaces for the very first time – including the nursery wing, Churchill's bedroom and bathroom and the 'Secretaries Room' - deepening visitors' understanding of Churchill and his life away from the spotlight, how his family lived and enjoyed Chartwell and explain how Churchill was supported by a team of staff in his work and home-life.

Ms Barnett adds, "Our appeal hopes to secure hundreds more of his much-loved possessions and ensure they are kept here, so our children and grandchildren will have the same opportunities we have to learn about the man to whom we all owe so much. If successful, our appeal will help us to guarantee that these objects can stay here forever and thereby safeguard his memory for future generations."

Despite his success, Churchill struggled to afford Chartwell in his latter years and it was only the generosity of friends that he was able to stay there.

They purchased the property and then passed it to the National Trust to ensure its place for future generations.

Following his death in 1965, aged 90, his widow, Clementine, found it too painful to remain there without him and handed the property to the trust. She moved to London and died in 1977.

It opened to the public for the first time in 1966. Ever since then, it has become a hugely popular destination of the tourist trail.

The appeal coincides with the 50th anniversary of its public opening.

As it stands, Chartwell has been left exactly as Lady Churchill wished it to remain after her husband's passing.

Churchill's relationship with Chartwell and with Kent, was well known. He once famously said: "A day away from Chartwell is a day wasted."

He added: "There is no doubt that it is around the family and the home that all the greatest virtues, the most dominating virtues of human society, are created, strengthened and maintained."

■ Money can be donated to the Churchill's Chartwell appeal online via nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell-revive or by calling 0344 800 1895.

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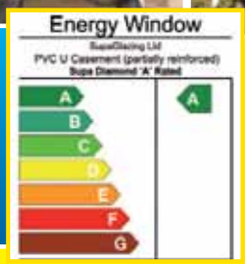


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Photographs of war heroes left hidden for one hundred years

Taken by a pilot killed during the conflict, the pictures were taken in Kent and featuring aerial shots of Dover Castle and brave fliers who were in charge of some of the most dangerous and daring flights during the dark days of the Great War...

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A REMARKABLE set of images have gone on display which shed fascinating light on what it was to be a World War One pilot in Kent.

The set of sepia photographs have been painstakingly developed after the 'lost' film, taken by a British fighter pilot, was rediscovered - having laid undeveloped for nearly 100 years.

Now the 80 historical snapshots are going on display at a museum in the town where they were found in Lancashire.

Captain William Chambers was just 21 when he was killed during a routine reconnaissance mission over France in May 1918.

Undeveloped films he had taken were passed down through the family until they arrived in the possession of his nephew, Richard Chambers, in the 1980s.

Mr Chambers told us: "It was my son Matt who found them in the desk of my uncle, Major Tom Chambers who died at his home in Ross-on-Wye.

"We were amazed at finding these negatives and finally set about having them properly scanned and developed. We called the Imperial War Museum, but they were not too keen on them.



PILOT: Sgt Pilot Herbert Monks

"I am glad the Kent on Sunday is taking an interest – it may spark some memories for some people in Kent. It has taken a team of people several years to get to this stage."

He showed them to a photographer in Lancashire, and now they are going on show in Ribble, Lancashire.

Some of them depict daily life for pilots and include aerial shots over Kent.

It was down to the hard work of David Lewis from the Leyland Photographic Society in Lancashire the images finally saw the light of day. He said it was "very emotional" work spending more than 200 hours developing the pictures in his home darkroom.

Now 80, he said: "There were around 8,000 pilots killed in training and life expectancy could be a matter of just a few days.

"These pictures show the importance of the Royal Flying Corps, which later became the Royal Air Force.

"During the Battle of the Somme, the pilots would fly over the battle lines and take pictures of the German trenches.

"Then they would write a note, put it in a metal tin, and drop it down to the artillery to tell them if they were firing in the right place.

"It's amazing to think of."

Captain Chambers was born in 1897, and as an electrical engineer, he joined up and served with the Lincolnshire regiment.

It wasn't long before he won his pilot's licence in October 1916 and took on the unenviable work as a photographic reconnaissance officer with 49 Squadron in Kent. These aircraft were often unarmed and relied on both height and cunning navigating to stay out of range from enemy guns, both light and heavy.

Dr David Hunt is the curator of South Ribble Museum where the images are now exhibited.

He said: "These photos do graphically shows the risk intrinsic to early flight.

"Landing strips were usually rough fields, the aircraft were string-bound wooden struts and canvas, and crashes were very frequent. Far more men were killed in training than in combat."

He added: "Great War aeronautical experts have told us that because the pictures were taken on service and often after accidents – rather than by the manufacturers – they are quite rare.

The exhibition is called Those Magnificent Men: The Air Photography of Capt WG Chambers RFC (1897-1918). It is hoped the images may tour the UK.





HISTORY: Dover Castle, above, and pilots with their aircraft in Kent during the Great War. Below, Richard Chambers





FLIMSY: Many died flying the aircraft





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Going, going, gone!

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

FOR more than 30 years it has been one of the most distinctive landmarks on the county's skyline. But in a matter of seconds on Wednesday it was razed to the ground.

Experts detonated the 801ft (244m) chimney of the defunct Grain A Power Station, creating some 40,000 tonnes of concrete rubble and stacks of dust and smoke.

Taller than 55 double-decker buses stacked on top of each other and more than double the height of Big Ben, the structure has been a prominent feature of the Medway skyline for more than 30 years.

In a split second, the final controlled demolition marked the end of an era for the many people who worked at the sprawling plant, or who live in the local area.

Bill Cliff, plant manager at Uniper's Grain B Power Station, said: "I'm sure the demolition was an emotional day for the people who have worked at Grain A Power Station, and for those that have become fond of seeing the chimney as a prominent feature on the Medway skyline."

Originally opened in 1979, Grain A was able to produce enough electricity to power more than one million homes. It closed in December 2012.

The demolition project began in April 2014 and so far there have been five demolition events to bring down the main infrastructure of the plant.

Since the project began, more than 84,000 tonnes of material has been removed from the site to be recycled, and work is due to continue until the end of the year.

The existing infrastructure at Grain A has been used to build a 1,275MW gas-fired power station on the same site. The development of Grain B means the site can continue to provide electricity to homes and firms.



LANDMARK: Once a feature of the skyline now a pile of rubble

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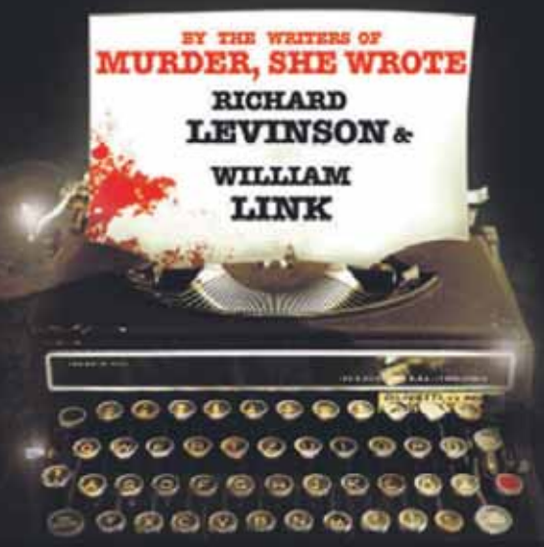
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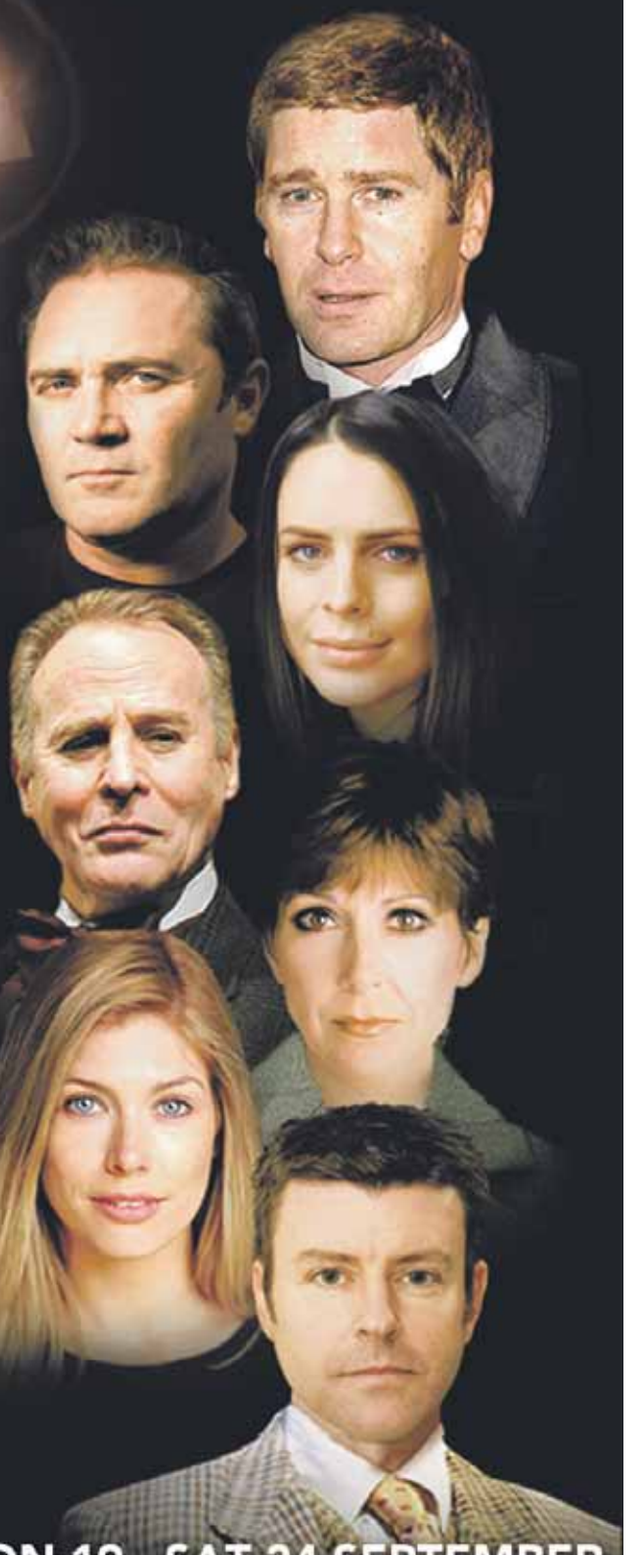
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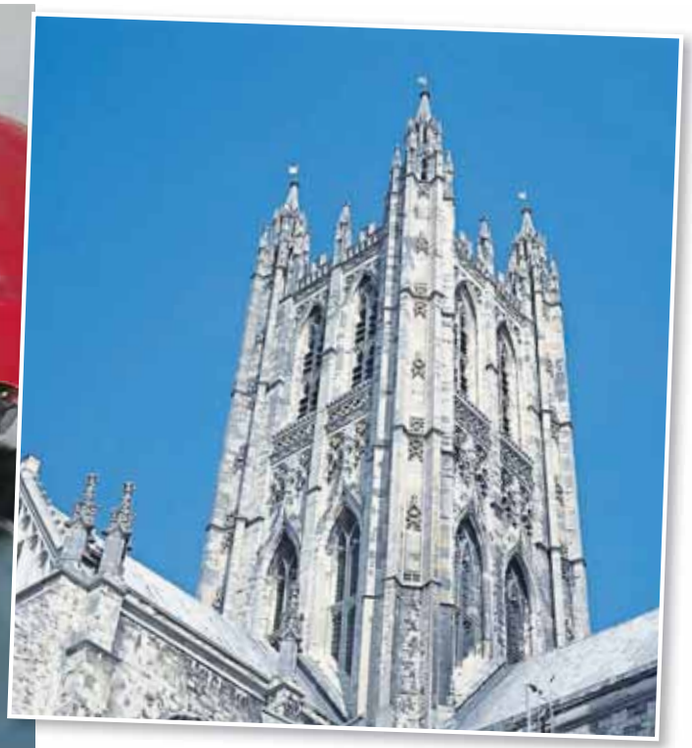




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RESTORED: Work continues to replace the priceless stained glass window at Canterbury Cathedral

Cathedral's £2.5m window on world

Chris Britcher visits Canterbury to see first hand remarkable refit of the Great South Window after it started to collapse...

ON A hot summer's day in June 2009, Canterbury Cathedral was doing brisk business; a honeypot for visitors from around the world coming to savour one of the world's most historic, and magnificent, structures.

Yet from the heavens would come a sign. A message from on high that would crash onto the ground below like a tablet carved in God's own hand.

It would be a wake up call for the World Heritage Site and one which would take seven years and £2.5 million to rectify.

On reflection, one with faith could argue that it was a warning; a large chunk of masonry, tumbling from the very apex of the magnificent Great South Window.

For any visitor, the window is one of the highlights of a building bursting with architectural splendour.

Rising 55ft high and stretching some 25ft wide, it is a gothic extravaganza first built in the 1430s and designed to flood the building with daylight. Its magnificent stained glass capturing the sun's rays to showcase the intricate art depicted upon it.

Fortunately, the visitors walking nearby on that fateful day received nothing more than a shock. Cathedral staff were alerted immediately and within minutes one of the key entrances to the cathedral was closed off. The tallest mechanical crane, or cherry picker, in the south east was secured a few hours later.

The window was at risk... and the glass within it in danger.

Thus began a seven-year battle to not only save the glass and repair the window, but also to raise the funds necessary – in addition to the regular donations the building, which requires never ending attention due to its age and sheer vastness, drinks greedily each and every year.

Immediate checks of the top of the window frame revealed vertical splits in the huge slabs of stone carved from quarries in the French city of Caen used to support and frame the huge window. It would require work like nothing else undertaken at the cathedral in recent memory.

The entire window had to be dismantled and rebuilt. Every pane of cherished stained glass painstakingly removed by hand.

"The complete dismantling of a 15th century window doesn't happen very often – less so in the 21st century," explains Jo Deeming, who has the rather grand title of surveyor to the fabric at the cathedral.

He has been chief co-ordinator of the mammoth project. As we meet on Monday in the shadow of the remarkable building and ahead of the complete removal of the exterior scaffolding which has obscured the window for so many year, he is only too aware that what the team of dedicated experts have achieved is something very special.

"We found sheer cracks running all the way through the masonry," he explains. "We have complete surveys of all parts of the building every five years. You'll always get some disrepair on a building of this age and magnitude. But this was pretty severe.

"It was like having a puncture on your car – however well you take care of things, every now and again something unexpected happens.

"So that started what was a series of really quite complex research and development and collaboration with

Continued on page 20

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Llandudno	T&T	£199	£194	£184	£179	-	£164	£144
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Sandown	BI	£184	£174	£174	£164	£169	£159	£144
Scarborough	T&T	-	£184	-	-	£164	-	£154
St Mawes	CI	£214	£204	-	£199	£199	£189	£174
Torquay	BI	£189	-	£179	£179	£174	-	£144
Weston-super-Mare	CI	£204	-	£194	-	£184	-	£154
Weymouth	T&T	£229	-	£214	£214	£209	-	£179
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Continued from page 19

other stakeholders to find out what happened to this window in such a short amount of time.

"We looked at wartime ordinance mapping; blast damage on the window which might have gone unrecorded, the condition of drains under ground, the environment; how the weather had been on the window. How activities of the church, such as bell-ringing, which resonates and makes the church move, had made its mark, and all against the back drop of a heavily patchworked and repaired, window."

Remarkably, the cause lay beneath their feet. Stone used for an extension of the cathedral way back in the past needed to be reinforced. In addition, a 16th century extension to a monastic drain running beneath the building had been leaking for years and years.

Concluding that that had to be addressed first and given the ancient and delicate nature of everything, it added months onto the process of resolving the window's problem.

As scaffolding was swiftly erected to an eye-wateringly high level, so a carefully co-ordinated process of installing a shutter to protect the glass from the poles or any bumps and scrapes began. The shutter would rise, the glass be hand removed, and the scaffolding then built up all the way to the very top.

The window has been subject to various repair and conservation work over the years – most notably in the 1970s when the decision was taken to introduce a protective layer of additional glazing – described by one as expert as "a sophisticated level of double glazing" – to help protect the stained glass from the elements.

In the new design, which has seen the stone blocks recarved by hand to exactly match the original, that 'double glazing' concept has been improved and refined to offer additional protection to the painted glass.

Leonie Seliger is the director of the stained glass studio at the cathedral –a team of specialists tasked with caring for the 1,200 sq ft of the ornate glass which lines the walls of the cathedral – and was responsible for that aspect of the operation.

She explained: "In the 1970s the corrosion of the medieval glass was so severe there was a danger of not being able to see through it and it was in danger of being eaten alive by dirt and water.

"So all the glass was removed, cleaned, many panels rebedded and set back in a protective glazing system. But that was still in its infancy back then and it turned out it wasn't a good idea as high winds blew water and dirt into the glass and that causes the corrosion.

"But it is thanks to those in the 1970s that this time around we didn't have a huge problem, but we felt we could improve the situation so much better."

Each pane of stained glass had to be stored in wooden panels. In total 179 panels then needed to be housed in a special fire-proof, conservation grade store.

Adds the glass expert: "But everyone downed tools to achieve it."

RAISING THE MONEY

FUNDING for this project was significant. A total bill of £2.5 million received no lottery cash or funding, but was all sourced by the generosity of private donors.

However, one major project would prove essential in helping to raise the profile of the restoration work – and that involved taking the stained glass on a brief tour to the US.

Carefully transporting a number of the precious panels, they headed to the Getty Museum in Los Angeles in late 2013 followed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in early 2014.

Huge crowds flocked to see the glass so often so high in the cathedral it can be overlooked.

Among the exhibition were six Romanesque-period windows that had not before left the cathedral precincts since their creation in 1178–80.

Some 120,000 visited while it was in California and another 90,000 in New York. With some 65,000 attending a rolling display in the crypt of the cathedral itself, that's some 250,000 people able to study the glass like millions have been able to do for centuries.

Although guarded on just how much that tour generated, those behind the project acknowledge the profile it generated alone would have added ''hundreds of thousands'' to the pot.



One group not downing tools was the cathedral's very own team of stonemasons who found themselves suddenly handed the biggest job they could imagine.

Funded by donations, the unit of then 10 full-time masons and six trainees, has to constantly be checked to ensure it is delivering better or equivalent value to putting the work to a private contractor.

Heather Newton, pictured far left with the stone that fell off, is the cathedral's head of conservation and oversaw the stone work.

"We bought in 70 tonnes of stone and after they had been carved it must have been around 40 tonnes of new stone that went into the window."

For stonemason Darren McCulloch-Smith it became more mission than simply a job.

He barely left the project for 18 months, taking little leave, working evenings and weekends. Little wonder he now describes it as his "masterwork". It will be his design flourishes found on the stones used in hundreds of years time.

The original stone for the cathedral came from Caen in France. But the blocks its quarries produce now were not of the sufficient size needed for this unique job.

Instead a team were dispatched to Poitiers in the west central area of our near neighbour. There it found the sedimentary limestone it was after.

Explains Mrs Newton: "We had agreement with everyone to dismantle the window completely. The replacement of all the stone at the lower level was to make sure it was a safe structure capable of taking the enormous load. Building it new ensured it would take the weight and provide a safe home for the glass.



"When we found the stone in Poitiers, all the standard British checks and tests were conducted to ensure it conformed to all necessary requirements.

"Each complex stone took one stone mason six dedicated weeks to carve it. That gives an idea of the scale of this operation."

With each block weighing in at around one and a half to two tonnes, the operation was huge.

An early trip was made to York Cathedral to see if any parallels could be drawn in its own enormous restoration project for its Great East Window.

Heather Newton added: "The problems were different, but there were parallels, and they were incredibly helpful."

And that was one of the main issues.

Because there are so few similar buildings in the world the answer lay in using experts and a bespoke solution.

As the window leans very slightly from top to bottom, those reconstructing it were forced to return to age-old methods - including fish wire tightly pulled and positioned to allow everything to be rebuilt in the perfect place. This needed, after all, to be inch perfect.

Jo Deeming explains: "This is now a 21st century window which happens to contain a number of older stones, but is now a very modern window."

Not that you would realise it.

With just a little of the external scaffolding still to be removed, the scale of the window and the gothic design today looks fresher and cleaner, but does not betray its history or surroundings.

In short, if you didn't know the work had been done, it would be easy to overlook it.

It is hoped the repairs conducted are of such a substantial nature the window will survive without the need for further major work for centuries.

Explains Leonie Seliger: "This is the most significant project any of us have been involved in. It is a once in many generations opportunity."

The motto of the cathedral's conservationists is to do only as much as is necessary and only then as little as possible.

This was a huge job, but it ensures the cathedral's majesty lives on unhindered.

If you suffer at all from vertigo, traversing the steps and the ladders which lead you to the very pinnacle of the interior of the Great South Window is not going to be one for you.

While the exterior scaffolding should be cleared by this weekend, inside, the delicate work of replacing the glass continues... and there's plenty to do.

For those working on it, the route to the summit is on scaffolding which hums as the huge cathedral organ tunes up, through narrow gaps via ladders strapped to scaffolding boards and poles.

On October 1, the Dean of Canterbury, the Very Rev Dr Robert Willis, will mark the removal of the external scaffolding by, as tradition dictates (albeit few can remember the source of such a tradition) by pouring a bottle of locally brewed beer over the new stones.

WHAT WAS ON THE GLASS?

PERHAPS surprisingly, much of the glass in the Great South Window did not start life there.

In fact it is only the stained glass at the top of each lancet, which has survived since it was first created in the 1430s.

The rest of the original glass was destroyed in the iconoclasm of the 17th century.

Explains stained glass expert at the cathedral, Leonie Seliger: "At end of 18th century they decided rather than plain glaze they would rob the rest of the cathedral of stained glass to fill the space in the south window.

"So they grabbed 22 of the 12th and 13th century Ancestors of Christ and stuffed them into this window," she smiles, "glass may seem stationary but it really is quite moveable if you're prepared to chop pieces off to make them fit – which today we wouldn't do, but then they did.

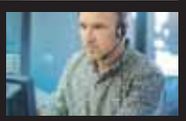
"They replaced those with plain glazing, then put in copies of the other work elsewhere in the cathedral."










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Huge crowds for Corbyn as he promises £30bn windfall

Perceived as either the saviour or destroyer of the Labour Party, interest in the leader was intense as he came to Thanet to speak at a rally last weekend...



By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk



JEREMY Corbyn's promise to deliver a £30 billion investment package if Labour wins power has been laughed off by a Kent MP.

The under-fire Labour leader said he wanted to see an investment bank for the English region, greater emphasis on renewable energy use for coastal communities, and improved broadband connectivity.

Mr Corbyn used a party leadership re-election campaign rally in Ramsgate, where hundreds of supporters turned out in force to provide their backing, to say: "Labour's investment commitment means delivering over £30 billion for the south east, and making sure that this funding goes to the places that need it most.

"I want to see a new regional investment bank for the south east that will focus on turning around the places that have been on the wrong side of the decisions made elsewhere.

"For Ramsgate, like other coastal towns, that commitment to invest means opening up the opportunities that are there.

"We have huge natural resources in the UK, a world-beating history of scientific research and technological development – including for many years at the Sandwich centre, just down the road from here.

"And we have talent that is simply going to waste at present because of a lack of investment.

"We should be talking about how to restore pride and prosperity to those places in so-called left-behind Britain. But we won't get there with the failed old model.

"Cornwall's £130m project to bring in superfast broadband has brought it one of the fastest growing digital economies in the country.

"This investment should be extended east into Kent to unlock potential in coastal towns across the Garden of England.

"Small businesses in the south east have nearly 20 per cent of the national turnover, but receive only 13 per cent of bank lending. Our current banking system is letting our small businesses down.

"Labour will turn that around. With new institutions under local control, with a clear public interest mandate, we'll give real power back to local communities to determine their own futures to rebuild and transform Britain, to ensure that no-one and no community is left behind."

However, Conservative Craig Mackinlay, who represents Ramsgate and South Thanet has described the claims as "laughable and unachievable".

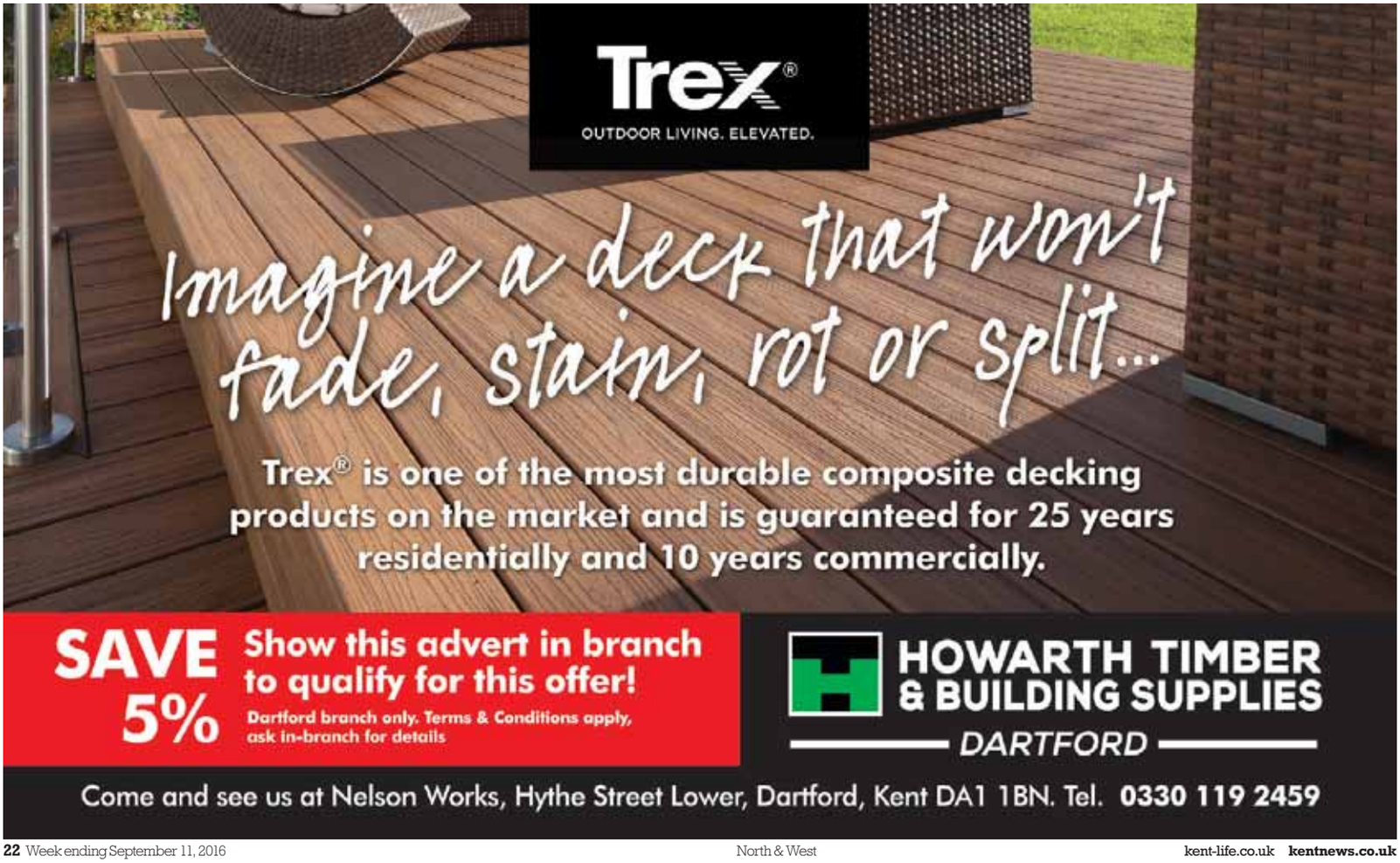
He told KoS: "I had a look at the video footage and it was very weird to see him sharing a stage with Jackie Walker [a senior Labour activist suspended from the party after allegedly making anti-Semitic comments].

"But I didn't really focus on the whole thing, to be honest.

"You can promise anyone everything for free but you have got to pay for it and this is the problem with his whole agenda.

"They're lovely promises in a nirvana but I don't make much of them because they're laughable and unachievable."

Quizzed on the strong turnout, Mr Mackinlay said he was pleased but





SUPPORT: Mr Corbyn addresses crowd by the bandstand on Victoria Parade in Ramsgate

not concerned about the level of support.

"I personally couldn't really care less if he wins or loses but I guess politically for us [the Conservatives] a Corbyn win is marginally better," he said.

"I don't think there's any doubt at all he will win but a good opposition keeps us on our toes and I genuinely think it's healthy in a democracy to have a strong opposition but it looks like we're not going to have one.

"I feel sorry for traditional Labour voters because he has taken the party so far away from what it once was."

Mr Corbyn is currently facing a leadership battle with Owen Smith, who has received the backing of key



VOTE: Mr Corbyn faces leadership election at the end of the month

Labour figures in the county including Tristan Osborne, a Medway councillor and the party's candidate in this year's police and crime commissioner election.

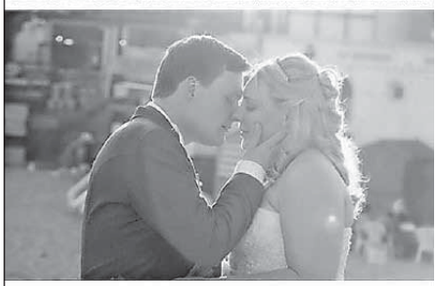
Mr Smith visited Medway last month where he set out his own agenda for leadership, claiming he will "implement radical plans to deliver the biggest increase in living standards in a generation".

But the leader is widely expected to retain his position at the head of the party, despite losing the confidence of a number of his MPs, when results are announced on September 24, barely a year after he was first elected leader.

Labour has haemorrhaged support in the county in recent months, after losing crucial seats in council by-elections in Ashford and Gravesham.

A decision on the new Labour leader will be taken on September 24.







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Friday, 21st October 2016

Celebrate Trafalgar Day at Eastwell Manor. Start the evening with a reception at 7.00 p.m. followed by a four course dinner, including wine and port. Guest speakers.

£55 per person *(including welcome drink, wine and port)*

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Wednesday, 26th October 2016

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Champagne reception, performance and dinner in the Manor Restaurant. **£60 per person**

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Friday, 28th October 2016

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Friday, 9th December 2016

The evening commences at 7.00 p.m. with a champagne and canapé reception in the Great Hall followed by a special four course menu with coffee and petits fours. After dinner, enjoy dancing to our resident live band in the Great Hall; the ball finishes at midnight. **£95 per person**

VEGAS NIGHT

Monday, 26th December 2016

Start the evening with a 'Vegas' cocktail at 7.00 p.m. followed by our Head Chef's American themed table d'hôte menu, finishing with coffee and popcorn. Enjoy the sounds of our smooth 'Sinatra' style singer with dancing in the Great Hall and try your luck at the 'fun' style casino and blackjack tables- prizes for all the winners.

£80 per person *Not suitable for children under 12*

MURDER MYSTERY - *Murder Behind The Mask*

Tuesday, 27th December 2016

The evening opens at 7.00 p.m. with a reception drink in the Manor and an introduction to the plot. The actors will be mingling with the guests and the clues will already be building. The story will unfold during the delicious table d'hôte dinner. Guests are invited to solve the whodunit with prizes for the super-sleuths. Ideal for all the family.

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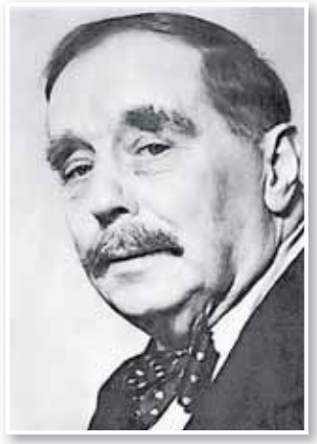
How HG Wells drew on doorstep inspiration for literary classics

September marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of one of the world's most pioneering authors. And as we find out, it was his time in Kent that would have such a profound impact on his output...

By Adele Couchman
adele.couchman@archant.co.uk







HOME: HG Wells at his Sandgate home, above, and how his home in Castle Road looks today, above left, complete with blue plaque.

THIS month will mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of one of the nation's most pioneering authors – and one for whom the time he spent living in the county is recognised by scholars as one of his most productive.

HG Wells' portfolio of work includes such classics as The Time Machine, The Invisible Man and the War of the Worlds – all of which continue to fascinate and intrigue long after his passing.

"Wells had a great nostalgia for rural landscapes and Kent most certainly impressed him," says Paul Allen, the chairman of the HG Wells Society, an organisation which celebrates and champions the legacy he left behind. It has members as far spread as Russia, Spain and America.

Born in Bromley in 1866 as Herbert George Wells – his family would call him Bertie – he would later spend more than ten years of his life in Sandgate, near Folkestone.

The son of a domestic servant and a struggling shopkeeper – his father playing cricket for Kent to supplement the small income from the family shop – his early ambitions were in science, studying biology, and teaching.

But after a suffering from a serious kidney condition, the famous writer first moved to Sandgate in the summer of August 1898 on the advice of his doctor, who told him to move away from London for the benefit of the sea air.

Explains HG Wells expert Michael Sherbourne, author of the biography Another Kind of Life, who gave a talk on the author's time in Folkestone to the Sandgate Society earlier this year: "Wells was in his early thirties, had recently divorced, remarried and embarked on a new life as a writer of science fiction, including The Time Machine, The Invisible Man, The War of the Worlds and The Island of Doctor Moreau.

"With the success of these books, he could have settled anywhere in the country. He was not tied to a location by job or family, yet he chose to come here.

"More remarkably, despite a previous history of never remaining in one place for any length of time, he stayed for almost a decade."

His work often saw the creation of fantastic worlds in which he could comment on the society that surrounding him. It was a method which would earn him the title of 'the father of science fiction'.

He and his wife Catherine (who he always called Jane) first moved to Beach Cottage in Granville Road, Sandgate, which they rented before leasing a semi-detached villa named Arnold House – now 20 Castle Road.

HG Wells Society chairman Paul Allen explains it was during the time the author was in his second rented property in Sandgate Wells, that he masterminded the 1902 novel The Sea Lady, a tale where a mermaid appears offshore at Sandgate and lures a local politician to join her in the sea. Now the Mermaid Cafe on Lower Sandgate Road in Folkestone is named after the central character.

Eventually, Wells' growing fame as a writer enabled him to build Spade House in Sandgate – with a commanding view of the sea, which is now occupied by Wells' Nursing Home on Radnor Cliffe Crescent.

It was here that Wells penned the 1908 classic War in the Air, which eerily depicts the use of aircraft to carry out raids on foreign lands before the dawn of the horror of both the world wars.

Yet as HG Wells author and head of English at Durham University, Professor Simon James explains, his Sandgate home played an important part in Wells' life as well as his work.

"Spade House was Wells' first utopian project and his own perfect little retreat," he explains. "It was the first private residence in Britain with all en-suite bathrooms, which Wells had purposely built with his mother Sarah in mind who had to continuously carry water up and down the stairs of the grand homes she worked in.

"Folkestone gave him a chance to create his own little world. Wells wasn't just a writer but a utopian thinker, who spent much of his time imagining what the world would be like if it were made perfectly."

Among Wells' other works vividly situated in the local landscape includes the 1905 social comedy Kipps: The Story of a Simple Soul, which features the adventures of a young draper's assistant who lived in New Romney and worked in Folkestone.

But his literary works aren't all the pioneering author had to show throughout his time in the seaside town. A notorious ladies' man, Wells was well known for his sexual conquests – including the affair he had with young Cambridge student Amber Reeves, with whom he had a child during his time at Spade House.

As biographer Mr Sherbourne notes, the south coast was, during Wells' time there, a relatively booming literary area.

The American novelist Henry James had moved to Rye, in East Sussex, in 1897 and took a close interest in the young author's development, alongside Heart of Darkness novelist Joseph Conrad in nearby Hythe exchanging visits, letters and reading matter with Wells.

As well as socialising with fellow authors, Wells also tried to fit into the community by serving as a magistrate for the Folkestone district.

As a restless soul, Wells eventually left Kent in 1909 and never returned, dying 37 years later in central London aged 80. But with an annual festival held every year in Folkestone to celebrate the author, it appears his legacy has not been forgotten.

The HG Wells Short Story Competition Festival is the brainchild of the former BBC aerospace correspondent Reginald Turnill, who interviewed Wells as a young reporter and wanted to commemorate his links to the area.

The festival culminates each year in the publication of a book containing the shortlisted entries and a £1,000 literary prize. It was set up and funded by Reg Turnill and his wife Margaret who continues to finance it from her home in Sandgate.

An awards ceremony takes place at The Grand on November 27 in conjunction with the Folkestone Book Festival, where 250 entries are currently being judged.

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County's cobnuts set to crack the £1m mark for the first time

Producers are now using the hazelnut variant in a variety of different products which means even though the weather hasn't been kind, this year's harvest could prove to be the most profitable ever...

By Adele Couchman
adele.couchman@archant.co.uk



TREAT: The Kentish cobnut is enjoying a mini revival with the harvest set to pump up to £700,000 into the local economy

THE weather may have taken its toll on this year's harvest but the market for the Kentish cobnut is set to break the £1 million mark for the first time.

While producers agree conditions have been far from perfect for the classic Kentish crop, the ability of producers to diversify has meant fresh opportunities to market their nut-based products.

And that means cobnuts are now being used in top restaurants and even in health and beauty products.

It is still a long way from its hey day at the turn of the 20th century, but reports the Kentish cobnut is a dying breed have been disproved.

Chairman of the Kentish Cobnuts Association and one of the county's biggest producers, is Alexander Hunt.

He explains that while the market may still be niche, an appetite for locally grown food and products is driving the market forward.

He explained to KoS: "Cobnuts are a high-value, niche, profitable product. We're enjoying a huge re-birth, with many young, high-earning city entrepreneurs and foodies getting a taste for our products."

Mr Hunt has farmed the nuts for 35 years at his Potash Farm in the village of St Mary's Platt, near Borough Green.

It has some 1,500 cobnut trees producing, on average, some 25 tonnes every year.

Now in peak season, which lasts from mid-August until the end of September, Mr Hunt expects this year's batch to tip the value of the industry over its normal barrier.

"I'd expect revenues for growers this year will push through the £1m mark – up from its normal value of £750,000," he says. "With the majority of cobnuts grown in Kent, some £600,000 to £700,000 of that total should be ploughed back into the county's economy. The industry is still a significant regional employer, providing seasonal work for picking, packaging and marketing the products."

The roots of the traditional Kentish cobnut date back many decades.

A favourite of the Victorians and Edwardians, who enjoyed them after dinner with an accompaniment of vintage port, the cobnut is a large type of hazelnut that was bred in Kent in 1830.

After the railway made its way here, connecting the county to London, cobnuts became a booming local industry, with 7,000 acres of plantations by 1913.

Today there is a mere 250 acres devoted to the nut, still largely centred in the county.

But while the marketing is improving, the weather remains the great unknown each year for producers.

And the warm weather in December has caused issues with this year's harvest.

Mark Lindsay-Bailey, of Bentinck Farm in Pembury, typically produces 20 tonnes of cobnuts a year, but explains this year is looking below average.

He told KoS: "Poor weather conditions in December meant that much of the pollen was being released early, meaning there were medium to below medium produce levels this year.

"But cobnuts are a tiny fraction of what we farm here because of the niche market. People will always love nuts and now more have realised they're healthy, the trade is definitely booming.

"But when you take into consideration the amount of cherries and apples we produce, it just doesn't compare."

Giles Cannon, owner of Roughway Farm in Tonbridge, supplies supermarkets like Waitrose and Morrisons but this year he has also failed to produce a bumper crop.

"This year's market is OK," he explains, "but definitely not something to celebrate. Last year we reached a record of 50 tonnes of cobnuts, but this year we'll probably meet just our yearly average of 40."

But while the quantity may be depressed, the quality has been increased.

Farmer and cobnut champion Alexander Hunt says the warm and moist summer has allowed the nuts to grow bigger in size and Kent's climate is now ideal for a top quality harvest.

His six-acre farm in St Mary's Platt sells cobnuts all year round and supplies 120 shops restaurants and traders from the likes of top London hotels to Cornwall's celebrated Eden Project.

The picturesque 16th-century village pub The Milk House in Sissinghurst is one which has added the delicacy to its seasonal menu.

Owner and head chef Dane Allchorne explains: "Cobnuts are a product people don't often see, and as a business we consistently try and incorporate seasonal produce onto our menu. We offer dishes sourced from a range of local suppliers to keep up with that – our menus are constantly changing every six weeks."

Past dishes at The Milk House include cobnut crusted plaice and a dessert of Kentish apple, pear and ginger crumble with oat, cobnut and honey granola.

The cobnut is also about to make its way into starters with the chef whipping up a venison carpaccio featuring cobnuts, cacao, blackberry and juniper chutney. Diners get the chance to dig in later this autumn.

But eating them is not the only way they are gathering a following.

At Potash Farm, the cobnuts are used in much more creative ways.

Aside from a cold pressed virgin cobnut oil it produces for cooking, there are cobnuts covered in chocolate, a fudge and brittle featuring the nuts and even biscuits.

But it is a range of cosmetic and health uses which may be where the cobnuts really blossom over the coming months.

There is now a Kentish cobnut oil repair balm. Rich in vitamin E, it is being marketed as a treatment for skin conditions such as psoraisis and eczema. There's a natural cobnut oil soap too.

Mr Hunt, from Potash Farm, has even teamed up with swanky Ashford-based biscuit and cupcake firm Bonnie Shortie to produce a line of Kentish cobnut and apricot granola bars for sale in its specialist stores and online.

The cobnut's talents, it seems, are multiple.

JUST WHAT IS A KENTISH COBNUT?

A cultivated variety of hazelnut, its forefathers are thought to have existed in gardens and orchards since at least the 16th century.

According to the Kentish Cobnut Association, children played an early version of conkers with hazelnuts; the game was called cobnut or cobblenut, and the winning nut 'the cob'.

A host of hazelnut variations were bred during the 19th century and it is thought the Kentish cob was probably introduced in around 1830. Such was its success, it soon supplanted most other varieties.

Cobnuts are seasonal, and are sold fresh, not dried like most other nuts. They can usually only be bought from about the middle of August through to October.

Stored nuts may be available from selected larger outlets through to Christmas.

At the beginning of the season the husks are green and the kernels particularly juicy. Nuts harvested later on have brown shells and husks, and the full flavour of the kernel has developed.

■ For more details, see kentishcobnutsassociation.org.uk

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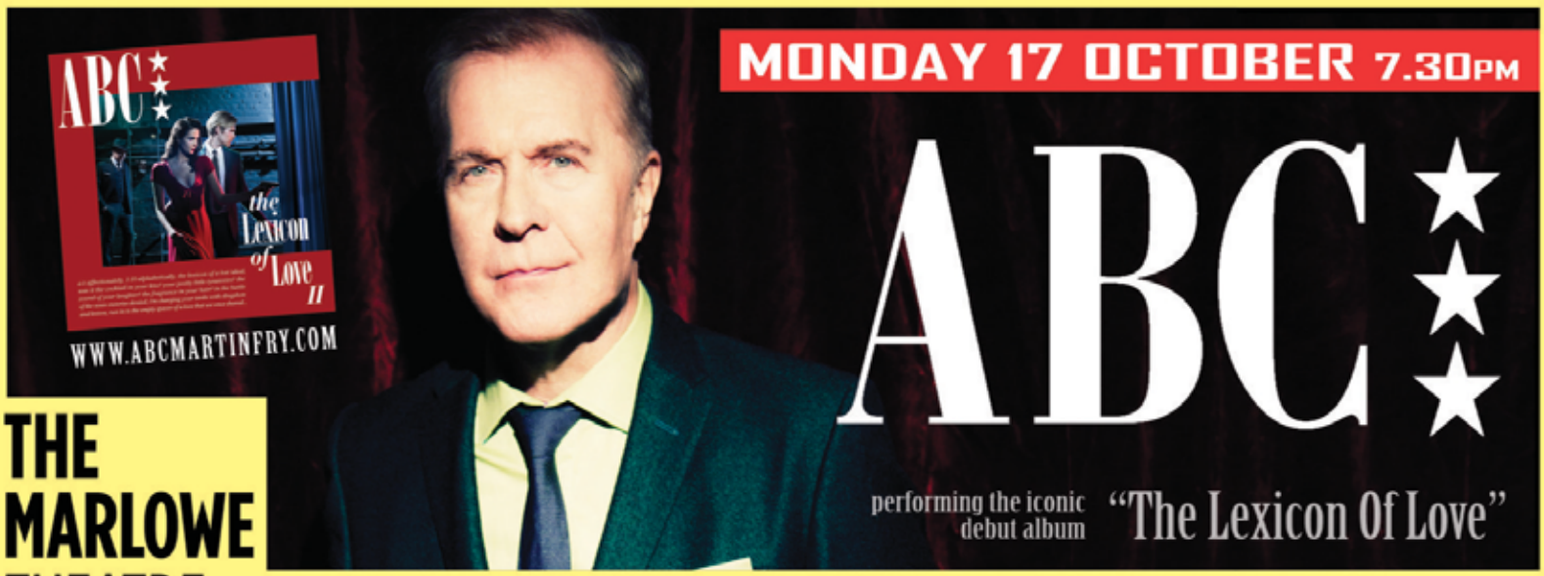
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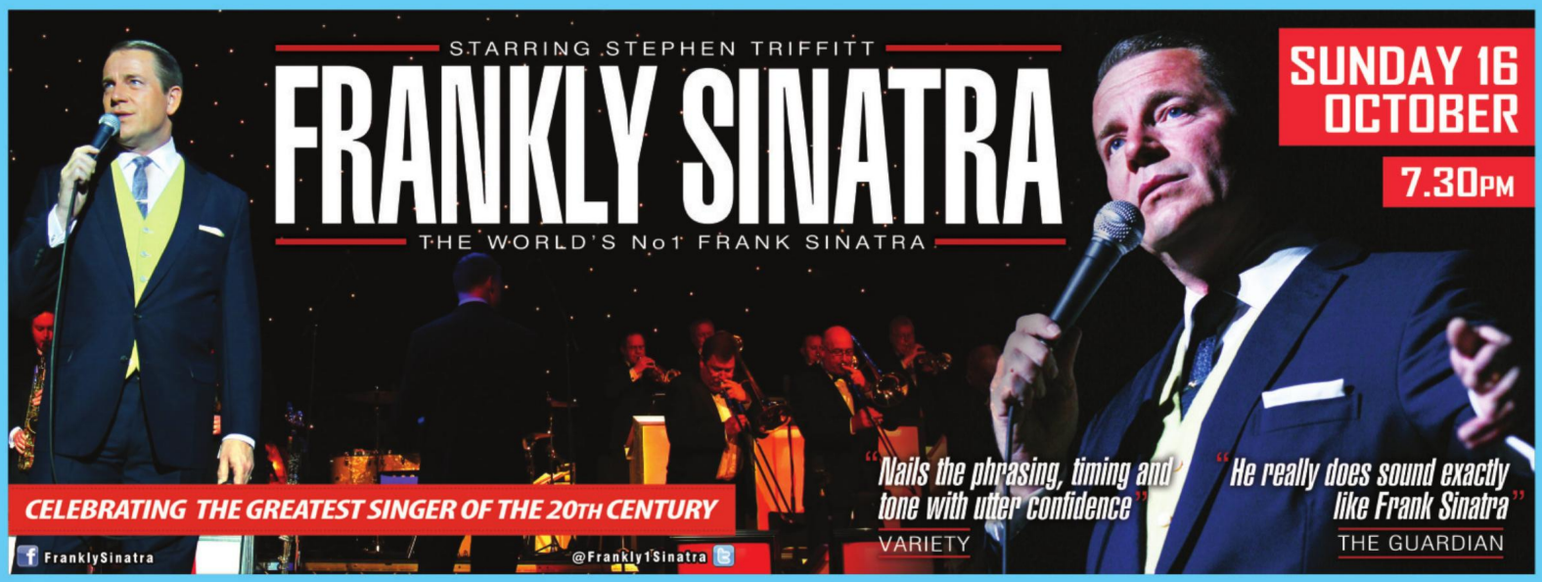
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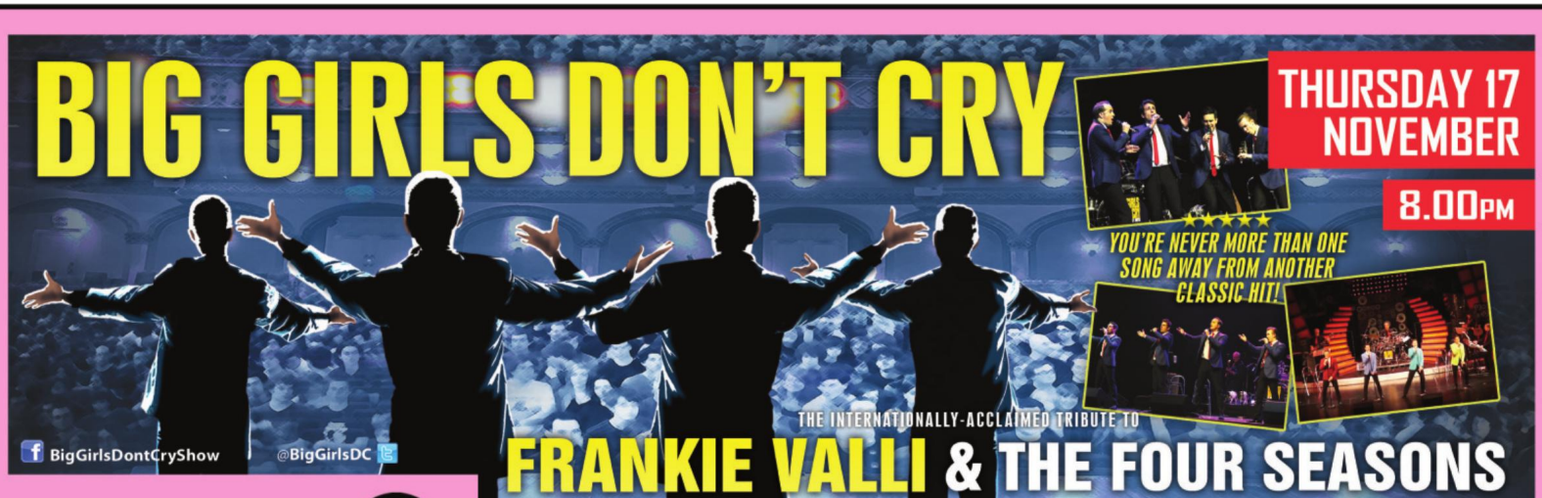
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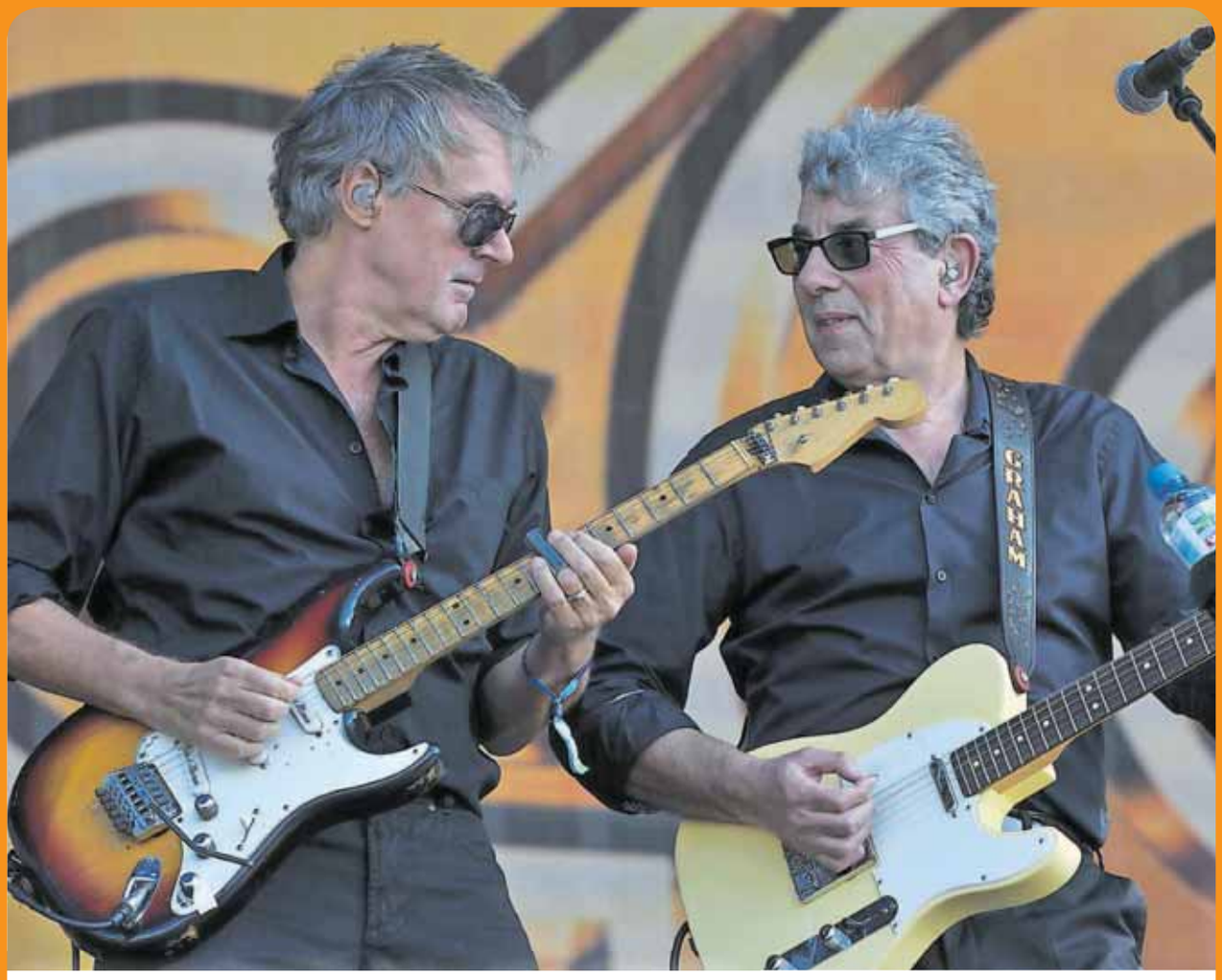
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STILL TOURING: Rick Fenn and Graham Gouldman on stage in Hyde Park in July, 2014

10cc are hitting the road again and heading to Kent

Trials and tribulations couldn't stop band from touring some 40 years on...

IN celebration of the 40th anniversary of their album Sheet Music, 10cc are back on the road for a 26-date UK tour.

The band have changed dynamic and set up throughout the years, but as they stand at the minute 10cc are made up of Graham Gouldman on bass, guitar and vocals; Rick Fenn on lead guitar, vocals and bass; Mick Wilson on vocals, guitar and percussion; Paul Burgess on drums and percussion; and Keith Hayman on vocals. guitar and keyboard.

Of course, there have been members of the band who have come and gone, including Kevin Godley. Mr Godley has come back to the band in recent years, however, to perform a gig at the Royal Albert Hall in May 2015, and also to help Mr Gouldman create a 5-disc CD box set of around 80 of the band's greatest hits.

Speaking to Mr Gouldman about 10cc's autumn tour set up, he says: "The tour is taking place, in part, because of Sheet Music's 40th anniversary, although this is more of a coincidence, but also because I have always wanted to do one album as part of a show.

"The shows in this tour are a combination of our favourite album and it's anniversary."

Delving deeper into why Mr Gouldman would want to focus on one album during a show.

He explains: "We wanted to perform an album as it was recorded.

"It gives us a chance to perform songs on albums that we have never had a chance to perform live before."

Having performed without Mr Godley for many years, when asked how he felt about Mr Godley's return, Mr Gouldman commented that it went down "very well" with everyone.

"None of the audience knew he would be coming out to perform, and it was great," he says. "Although not there in the flesh, throughout the Sheet Music tour Kevin makes an appearance on video."

10cc's first live gig was back in 1973 at the Isle of Man Casino, and looking back on that performance now, Mr Gouldman simply says: "Where did the time go?".

And rightly so, it has been 43 years since that performance and the band are still going strong.

They did split up temporarily when Mr Godley and Lol Creme left the band to work on a device they invented for guitars.

The band members all had their individual successes once they disbanded but then came back together, still as 10cc.

"We came back as 10cc because we enjoy performing. We like to do it," enthuses Mr Gouldman.

This is evident from the fact that they still perform two or three times a week, and regularly tour each year.

When asked what he's most looking forward to from 10cc's autumn tour, Mr Gouldman replies: "I'm looking forward to seeing everyone when we get out there on stage."

10cc's autumn tour is visiting three Kent venues: Margate's Winter Gardens on October 1; Tunbridge Wells' Assembly Hall on October 5; and Dartford's Orchard Theatre on October 10.

To purchase tickets, contact the respective box offices.

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SINGLE lady, 65, blonde, quiet nature, likes the outdoors, picnics, jiving, WLTM single gentleman for companionship and possible romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423411**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 419673**

WIDOW, 70s, brown hair and eyes, likes walking, pub lunches, places of interest, good company and lots more, seeking a kind genuine male, a n/s, 70-80. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423359**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715**

GENUINE lady, 67, slim, GSOH, caring, honest, active, likes most things in life, days out, countryside, animals, long walks, visiting interesting places, cooking and holidays, WLTM a caring, honest male with GSOH, 67-73, with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423289**

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. **Tel: 0906 515 3042 Box 422363**

PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399**

KIM, 50, lovely kind, 5ft 6, brown eyes, dark curly hair, curvy figure seeks nice genuine guy for LTR, same age as me. **Text only Mailbox: 5512493**

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375**

RITA, seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, she's very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403**

LORRAINE, attractive solvent brunette, 34yrs, own house/car wltm gent any age, looks unimportant but must have GSOH. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3030 Box 422415**

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422339**

SUSIE, 36yrs, attractive, tall slim blonde seeks fifty shades of grey with discreet gent, must have a fun side looks unimportant. **Tel: 0906 515 3038 Box 424045**

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422411**

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTM a reliable, sincere man for LTR. **Text only Mailbox: 5443434**



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KATIE, 39yrs, loves dressing up, role play, fun etc. Hoping to meet like minded chap any age but must be understanding. **Text Only Box: 4085012**

50YRS, old attractive lady. Sheila, caring honest, seeks discreet gent. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422469**

TAMLA, naughty but nice, curvy kitten! I am 46yrs and love to have some fun. Dates/Chats, something different. Pls call me. **Text Only Box: 4185035**

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTM similar male for relationship. **Text only Mailbox: 5453851**

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427**

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. **Text only Mailbox: 5320299**

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. **Text only Mailbox: 5456242**

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433**

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MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429**

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. **Text only Mailbox: 4715158**

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. **Text only to Mailbox: 4198603**

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041**

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420237**

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039**

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091**

SLIM female GSOH, 5'3, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600**

KIND lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889**

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657**

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883**

Men Seeking

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MALE smoker, seeks female 40-69 for LTR **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391702**

JOHN, 70, widower, lives in Broadstairs, Kent, slim, fit, active, young at heart, kind, caring and loving, likes country/beach walks, holidays, days out, theatre, eating out, music, animals, WLTM slim, attractive lady, to share interests and nice times together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424043**

HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422905**

GENTLEMAN, 76yrs old, clean-shaven with a good head of hair and a smart dresser, hoping to meet lady for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423645**

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388372**

BRIAN, 6ft3, fit, bit grey but genuine and kind, looking for a naughty female, for no strings adult fun, if you're interested please get back to me, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423483**

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929**

MALE, 53, 5ft6, single, hardworking, looking for slim/small lady, 40-56. Maidstone, Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423363**

LIVELY old boy, OHAC, near sea in Folkestone, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks lady companion/lover, 58-68 yo. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422621**

OUTGOING male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793**

ANDREW, 50, slim to medium build, lives in Ashford/Kent area, WLTM a women, 40-70, for discreet fun, would be great to hear from you so get back to find out more! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423271**

GARY, 53, caring, likes snooker, bowls, looking for a nice woman to meet and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423145**

EDWARD, 77, looking for a companion South East area of Kent, for holidays, days out, social events, and lots more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423039**

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719**

TONY black male, 58, 5ft6, med build, n/s, seeking a local mature fun loving female 40/75 in the Chatham/Gillingham area for discreet fun. **Text only Mailbox: 5459052**

MALE, 54, shyish, looking for fun times with a lady, 60-70, with GSOH, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422431**

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955**

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTM professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569**

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wining, dining and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787**

TALL single early 60's male looking for pure hearted lady for LTR. **Text only Mailbox: 5496781**

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175**

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397**

MALE, widower, n/s, would love to meet buxom friendly lady, up to 70, for friendship at first, interests include all types of music, walking, quizzes. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422957**

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HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422905**

WRITER, tall, slim, fit, natural dark hair, generous, seeks lady for erotic rendezvous, I will make it worth your while! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422777**

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418889**

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789**

PHILLIP, 66, into farming and country life, looking for a loyal, genuine lady, someone I can trust, to go on holidays with and spend time together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422699**

TONY, early 60s, 6ft, slim, fit, easy going, looking for no strings fun with a lady, age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422643**

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587**

LOCAL Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417127**

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTM similar lady to share interests, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375**



PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195**

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970**

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTM someone to share interests and quality time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329**

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906**



515 7112 Box No: 422359

HARLOW male, 40, kind, attractive, happy, considerate looking to meet slim female for LTR, children welcome. **Text only Mailbox: 5468389**

FRIENDLY passionate male, 55, 6ft, medium build, clean, discreet, lots of TLC to offer, seeks female for fun times. Canterbury **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381222**

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985**

MALE, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more, **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883**

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

WLTM 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. **Text only Mailbox: 5441709**

SLIM straight guy into CD and role-play, WLTM similar for friendship and fun. **Text only Mailbox: 5544057**

TOBY, 41yrs, recently divorced, now seeking different relationship, bi curious but not gay, like minded to me, any age. **Text Only Box: 4125006**

CD male, into wrestling, looking for CD, bi or gay male, 45-55, for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423833**

TV/BI CD, seeks feminine male with similar interests for discreet daytime meets. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406735**

BI male, aged 54 seeks similar for friendship and fun. **Text only Mailbox: 4623598**

PETER, 85, 5ft6, semi retired, WLTM a man for casual meets, nothing too heavy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423423**

Friends

MALE looking for male, 30-60 for no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406049**

FEMALE seeking genuine straight

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Lucy O'Byrne on taking on the famous role of Maria Von Trapp

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

IT'S one of the biggest selling musicals of all time, and has seen iconic actors play its cast including Julie Andrews, and Christopher Plummer. And now the theatre version of the Sound of Music is coming to Dartford.

Taking on the role of Maria Von Trapp, the nun turned nanny turned Nazi refugee, is The Voice's Lucy O'Byrne. Here she talks through how she acquired the role and what it means to be a part of the show.

Ms O'Byrne was asked to play Maria once The Voice finished. "The people from Bill Kenwright contacted my agent and my theatrical agent pretty much as soon as The Voice ended, which was way back in April, 2015," she claims. "I had three rounds of auditions and I was really put through my paces."

When asked how she felt upon receiving the role Ms O'Byrne commented: "Oh it was amazing, I'm not going to lie, I did cry a little bit.

"It was amazing to call my family and tell them I'd got it."

This role marks Ms O'Byrne's musical theatre debut so there was no doubt she was nervous.

"Performing is in my blood but I was nervous," she added.

"It was big and as a debut it was huge and big pressure because it's an important show to so many people and everyone knows it, and so many people have their own idea of who Maria should be, but I just made it my own."

Ms O'Byrne has an Irish accent, which many will know does not correspond with that of our original Maria Von Trapps, and so a question posed was whether she needed elocution lessons.

She said: "Maria has an English or received pronunciation accent so there are plenty of people around me to help me out.

"And I've been in England for the last three years, so my Irish accent is softening, so hopefully I don't find it too hard."

The tour, having already started, has received huge amounts of praise with West End reviews giving it four stars,

The Sound of Music is coming to Dartford's Orchard Theatre from September 27 to October 1.

Tickets can be purchased from the box office by visiting orchardtheatre.co.uk or calling 01322 220000.



THE VOICE: Ms O'Byrne landed the role of Maria after coming second on The Voice UK

Dreamcoat has X Factor



X FACTOR'S Joe McElderry wears the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat as it comes to Dartford's Orchard Theatre from February 7 to 11 2017.

For tickets, visit orchardtheatre.co.uk

Fifth solo tour for Kumar

TOURING with his fifth solo UK tour, Nish Kumar, is set to visit Maidstone's The Hazlitt on October 1.

With his last tour receiving five stars from The Mirror, and The Herald, his next tour looks set to be just as big.

For tickets, visit 01622 758611.

Millie to visit two venues



THOROUGHLY Modern Millie is coming to Dartford's Orchard Theatre from April 10-15, 2017, and Bromley's Churchill Theatre from June 5-10, 2017.

For tickets call respective box offices or visit websites.

You've Got A Friend

A JAMES Taylor and Carole King tribute show is making its way to Churchill Theatre Bromley on September 13.

The show entitled You've Got A Friend will feature classic hits such as I Feel The Earth Move, and You Make Me Feel.

For tickets, visit churchilltheatre.co.uk



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Top violinist joins Medway



MEMBER of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Julian Milone, will join Medway Town's Music Centre this September.

The violinist, from Rochester, will be in charge of the string department.

Rochester Film Society

ROCHESTER Film Society (RFS) are working with partners The Huguenot Museum, and will kick off their new season next week with a packed programme.

Chair of RFS, Mark Jones, said, "We are delighted to be working in partnership to present another affordable season."

Australian artist's debut



A FINE art artist is holding her exhibition about memory and found images in Canterbury on October 7.

Heather Meyerratken's work has previously been exhibited in Australia, Japan, New York.

Made in Thamesmead

RETURNING for a second year is the Thamesmead Arts Festival, which celebrates all things made in Thamesmead.

The festival will offer more than 20 events from September 16 to 18, and is produced by the local community.

Events include open air film screenings.

Britain's Got Talent's auditions hit the road

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk



THE nation's talent show, Britain's Got Talent, is once again touring the nation looking for the next person with talent to perform at the Royal Variety Show.

The BGT team are coming to four Kent venues, and those successful auditionees will then go on to the televised judges auditions.

The show is open to any performer of any age with any talent, all the team are asking for is that applicants have a skill that they think will impress.

Amelia Brown, executive producer for the show, said "We've had some amazing winners over the last ten series, from this year's champion Richard Jones, who was the first magician to ever win the show, right through to Paul Potts, Diversity, and Collabro.

"We can't wait to see what talent Kent has to offer. Anyone can apply – there is no age limit and we are looking for all kinds of talents, so if you feel you have something special to show us then make sure you apply, you never know where it might take you."

This year, BGT celebrated its 10th anniversary and crowned soldier and magician Richard Jones as its winner.

The magician wowed the nation with his finale performance and tribute to Second World War prisoner and war magician, Fergus Anckorn. As well as performing at the Royal Varity Show, Mr Jones appeared in the West End show Impossible at the Noel Coward Theatre.

Among the shows other successes are Susan Boyle who has sold over 20 million records around the globe, Diversity who have had five sell-out tours,and Paul Potts who is now a multi-platinum selling artist.

Auditions are taking place at four different Kent venues including, Dreamland Margate on September 10; Fremlin Walk Shopping Centre in Maidstone on September 11; White Friars Shopping Centre in Canterbury on September 13; and Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunridge Wells on September 16.

To apply, visit www.itv.com/talent



STAR-QUALITY: David Walliams is a regular judge each year



SPELL-BINDING: Richard Jones wowed the judges

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Don't limit your body with the things you love

Olivia Wollenberg talks openly about the health issue behind her healthy cooking business model

Life doesn't get much sweeter than biting into a warm honey cake, fresh from the oven.

But in this kitchen, there's no refined sugar – nor gluten or dairy, for that matter – in sight. This is Livia's, aka Olivia Wollenberg's, kitchen, and she's made her name by baking with gut-friendly alternatives.

Wollenberg started off baking and selling hundreds of fresh crumbles from her mum's kitchen in North London, and now has a range of Raw Millionaire Bites, her gluten, dairy and refined sugar-free answer to millionaire's shortbread, filled with gooey date caramel.

Like her friend Ella Woodward of Deliciously Ella fame, it was her own health problems that eventually inspired Wollenberg to revolutionise her approach to eating.

"I was always the person at three o'clock who would be like, 'I need some chocolate, I need a cupcake'. I think a lot of people feel that a working day is really long. Even at school, I was excited for my mum to pick me up because I knew she would come with Nutella sandwiches in the car," confesses the 27-year-old. "I was always just living for food. But my stomach got more and more sensitive. I would go out for dinner with my friends on a Saturday night and never be able to join them at a bar afterwards because I was in so much pain. I didn't want to go and see a doctor because I still wanted to go for pizza, and I was so scared they would say to me, 'You can't eat gluten and dairy any more', so I just put up with it."



FODMAP DIET: Olivia Wollenberg

In spring 2014, things were so bad that her mum, who she was still living with at the time, told her enough was enough.

She finally saw a nutritionist, who made her keep a food diary for two weeks.

"She looked at the first two pages and said, 'Just what I thought, you're someone who's going to need to follow a FODMAP diet'. And I was like, 'A FODMAP what?'"

FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrates that can be poorly absorbed in the small intestine, resulting in IBS-like symptoms for some. Reactions can, of course, vary in severity. Among the worst offenders are onions and garlic, which Wollenberg now avoids entirely.

Although she now says the restricted diet "ruined my life", it also set her on a path to swapping academia for entrepreneurship.

"The thing I was most miserable about was having something indulgent and delicious without any gluten, dairy and refined sugar.

"I started looking at blogs online and people were talking about using natural sugars, like dates, and maple syrup, and them reacting better with their body. I just started playing around because I needed a three o'clock pick-me-up. At the time it wasn't a business idea, it was just to keep me going because I was so miserable."

Moscow State Circus

THE Moscow State Circus returns to Rochester with its latest production, based on the Russian folklore story of Cvetik-Semicvetik, from October 12 to 16.

Wizard Wacko and his crazy side kick Natalia Mezentceva invite the audience to an enchanted garden – a place where dreams come true.

For tickets, visit ticketmaster.co.uk or call 0844 856 5555.

Chislehurst sings blues

AMERICAN blues singers and songwriters, Mike Zito and Albert Castiglia, are coming to The Beaverwood Club in Chislehurst on September 26.

Their performance in Chislehurst will be the sixth date of their nine-day In Your Face UK tour.

Advanced tickets cost £13, and to purchase you can visit feenstra.co.uk/contact/feenstraticketform.php or call 0208 761 9078

Folk visits Canterbury

FOLK performer, poet, singer, songwriter, and comedian Richard Digance will be opening the autumn season at The Gulbenkian, Canterbury, on September 11.

Mr Digance is a Bafta nominated and a Gold Award recipient from the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters.

He will be supported by Anna Ryder.

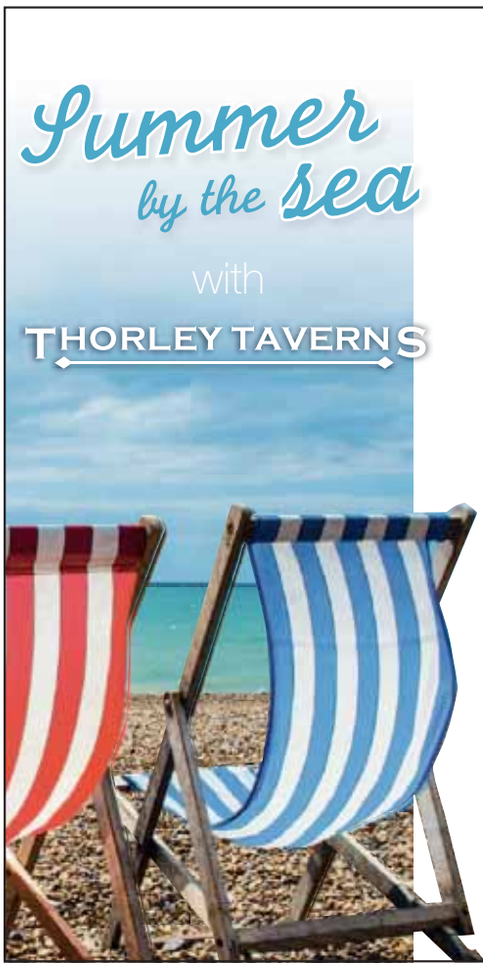
Tickets can be purchased from boxoffice@kent.ac.uk or by calling 01227 769075.

Nikki Loy on Shane tour

UK singer-songwriter Nikki Loy will be supporting Shane Filan on the second leg of his tour, which is coming to Tunbridge Wells' Assembly Hall on October 21.

Ms Loy is set to release her third solo album, Pivotal, on October 14, so songs for this tour date will come from it.

For tickets, visit ticketmaster.co.uk or the Assembly Hall box office on 01892 53061 or assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk



The Captain Digby

The Captain Digby is an award winning family restaurant in Thanet and one of the most popular places to visit all year round. The Digby caters for couples and families alike with fantastic views overlooking Kingsgate Bay for the adults and an indoor play area for the children. It's well worth a visit, a warm welcome awaits.

The Captain Digby, Kingsgate, Broadstairs, CT10 3QH

www.captaindigby.co.uk | 01843 867 764



Tartar Frigate

The historic Tartar Frigate is one of the only 18th century flint restaurants in Kent. Widely renowned as one of the best seafood restaurants in Kent, the Harbour restaurant boasts stunning panoramic views over Viking Bay in Broadstairs. If seafood isn't for you then you can take advantage of the extensive menu, which also includes mouth watering traditional dishes from around the world.

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Dreaming of California's blue skies

TRAVEL REVIEW

By Lisa Haynes, Press Association

IT's barely dawn and I'm bleary-eyed and carrying a yoga mat towards the ocean.

"Listen to the ocean and feel the sunbeams on your face," our yoga instructor Jordan says soothingly.

Balancing barefoot on the sands of Huntington Beach, I quickly discover life pretty much revolves around the ocean here.

Think technicolour surf shops on every corner, the wetsuit uniform as standard, athletic bods cycling/rollerblading/running past, giant boards tucked under their arms.

Huntington plays host to some 90 surf tournaments year-round, including the world-famous US Open.

It's a family-orientated spot, where children as young as four are on the water navigating mini kayaks and surfboards.

Our surf-meets-canoe activity is led by local pro-surfer Rocky McKinnon. Within seconds he's assessed the board and paddle each of us should use based on our height, build and skill level: "Beginners are better suited to wider, longer boards for stability," he tells me.

Rocky shows us how to glide forwards, turn and stop with minimum wobble, until we feel like SUP pros after just 45 minutes on water.

Instead of reading by the pool afterwards, I hire a bike instead.

I cycle along the paved boardwalk from my beachfront Hyatt Regency hotel to neighbouring Newport Beach and back.

At night, the beach totally transforms, with the palm trees illuminated by flickering balls of open-fires. More than 500 fire rings are scattered throughout the beach and they're free to use, but on a first-come, first-served basis.







RELAXATION MEETS GLAMOUR: California offers beaches as well as cities

We treat ourselves to the more luxurious option of a VIP 'fire butler' of sorts - someone who stokes the fire, sets up chairs, and keeps our drinks topped-up as we warm our jet-lagged faces around the flames.

He tells us the most popular fire pit positions are hotly contested: "At weekends, people stake out the best pits in the early afternoon to use at night. But when it's something like the fourth of July, whoah, they can be queuing from 5am!"

We toast s'mores, the US campfire delicacy of chocolate biscuits and marshmallows sandwiched together, and munch them quickly before the marshmallow melts into our laps. I feel like I'm in a scene from The OC.

From beach life to the high life, we leave Huntington behind and drive the hour-and-a-half to buzzy West Hollywood, where there's a marked contrast in the pace of life.

We check in at the uber-glam Mondrian Hotel on Sunset Boulevard, and marshmallows around the fire soon shift to Martini cocktails around the Skybar pool.

Rooftop hotels and bars are the best place to fully absorb the bright lights and twinkling skylines on a balmy night in West Hollywood, and EP & LP is one of the hottest new hangouts – complete with epic views of Hollywood Hills to Downtown LA. We arrive for our reservation at the same time as 300's Gerard Butler, and Orange Is the New Black's Ruby Rose sits next to us as we're served dinner downstairs.

Strolling around Maxfield on Melrose Avenue is like entering a treasure trove of designer pieces that belong in a Hollywood Hills mansion display cabinet.

For some mid-Melrose fashion fuel, we stop off at the cult Alfred Coffee – takeaway cups are branded with the Instagram-able 'But first, coffee' slogan.

Other trendy WeHo hangouts with paparazzi at the ready are Urth Caffe and hip vegan-Mexican joint Gracias Madre, where Beyonce and Jay Z go to grab a healthy lunch. Following their lead, we dine in the picturesque al fresco courtyard and share repollitos fritos, and tacos stuffed with sweet potato, guacamole and cashew nacho cheese.

We get one final rooftop-and-blue-sky fix before boarding our flight home. Catching rays on the glass open-air terrace, we top-up our SPF one last time, sip on Kir Royales and toast the Hollywood Hills in the distance.

TRAVEL FACTS

:: At the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa rooms cost from US$214 per night and West Hollywood's Mondrian LA, where rooms cost from US$299 per night.

:: Air New Zealand flies daily from London to LA. Return flights start from £489 pp

:: For more information on Huntington and WeHo, visit www.surfcityusa.com and www.visitwesthollywood.com

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



Name

SAUSAGE PARTY (15)

At Shopwell's supermarket, the food that festoons the aisles begins each day with a rousing song in the hope that one of the customers - "the gods" – will spirit them into dazzling white light beyond the checkouts.

Among these optimists is a sausage, Frank (Seth Rogen), who is desperate to slip between the soft and inviting bun halves of his finger roll girlfriend, Brenda (Kristen Wiig). "I just don't know why you're limiting yourself to one bun," despairs fellow hot dog Carl (Jonah Hill). "I'm a bunogamist," proudly retorts Frank.

When a jar of shell-shocked Honey Mustard (Danny McBride) is returned to Shopwell's unopened, Frank, Brenda and chums discover the so-called gods are monsters, who - gulp! - consume unsuspecting foodstuffs.

Firewater (Bill Hader) and his non-perishable cohorts Mr Grits (Craig Robinson) and Twink (Scott Underwood) in the alcohol aisle confirm the nightmarish truth.

While Frank sparks a supermarket revolution, taco Teresa (Salma Hayek) makes lusty overtures to Brenda and feminine hygiene product Douche (Nick Kroll) embarks on a murderous rampage.

Sausage Party is exceedingly naughty, but nice.

Rating: Four stars

DAVID BRENT: LIFE ON THE ROAD (15)

It has been 12 years since David Brent (Ricky Gervais) awkwardly ruled the roost at the Slough branch of Wernham Hogg Paper Company.

He's now a travelling salesman at Lavichem, peddling sanitary products with gusto and irritating his work colleagues including office bully Jezza (Andrew Brooke) and HR manager Miriam (Rebecca Gethings).

Brent does have a few supporters, including Pauline from accounts (Jo Hartley), who has a crush on him, and receptionist Karen (Mandeep Dhillon).



Brent takes unpaid leave from his unedifying day-to-day grind to pursue his dream of music stardom

"The ghost of Alexander O'Neal visited me one night and said, 'You have got what it takes'," he explains.

Brent plunders his savings to hire a despairing road manager (Tom Basden) and a quartet of talented sessions musicians, including his nephew Stu (Stuart Wilkinson) on guitar.

David Brent: Life On The Road is peppered with uproarious one-liners and moments of skin-crawling brilliance.

A rapper called Dom Johnson (Ben Bailey Smith aka Doc Brown) joins Foregone Conclusion to bolster the band's yoof appeal.

Rating: Four stars

By Hannah Stephenson
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



DIGGING POTATOES: You can match the colours of plants with the colours of foliage you use

Pots of pizzazz in autumn

DON'T worry if your summer containers are now past their best because you can perk up your pots with autumn plantings.

There are two approaches to autumn and winter pots, says Jeremy Hall, group plant buyer for Squire's Garden Centres.

"If you are a tonal person and like things in harmony, a good way of doing that is to match the colour of the flowers to the colour of the foliage you are using. Lamium with silver foliage and a pink flower would look great with the silver foliage of cyclamen.

"If you take an, 'I like it mixed' approach and like rustic charm, heucheras are great at giving contrast of foliage. I'd probably use two colours of heuchera together - go for a burgundy type with a bright yellow one."

Other combinations he recommends include Ajuga 'Black Scallop' planted with white mini cyclamen, or with the silver foliage of calocephalus.

For a traditional autumn feeling try orange pansies and viola with Ajuga 'Burgundy Glow', which has a pink through to burgundy foliage colour.

"Lamium 'Beacon Silver' is another great subject for tonal planting. Its silver foliage edged in green is a great foil for pinks and whites."

Permanent plantings of acid-loving plants such as azaleas will require ericaceous compost in the pot, but if you are just planting up your pots short-term to last from autumn to spring, a multi-purpose compost with added feed should suffice, he advises.

Flowering plants such as pansies and violas which bloom in autumn become dormant in the winter months.

Other autumn and winter favourites, such as heathers, skimmia, ivy and other evergreens will give you at least some interest in the cooler months and if you plant some bulbs underneath them in autumn such as dwarf narcissi or muscari, they will add colour in spring.

"In our autumn barrel, we are using the miniature daffodil 'Tete-a-tete', which is the most popular because it's small growing and produces three or four flowers from a single bulb from February onwards," Hall explains.

If you want berries in winter, add Skimmia japonica subsp. 'Reevesiana' to your display, a small, spreading female shrub with deep green leaves which produces clusters of bright red berries in winter.

Ornamental cabbages are gaining in popularity as good breeding work has helped produce more compact plants.'Curly Pink', 'Curly White' and 'Curly Red' are the most popular. They'll last up until Christmas.

Ornamental grasses such as pennisetums are also gaining popularity. Combine them with violas, hedera and callunas for further colour, he suggests.

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feedback

It's not Empire dreams of Brexit

RAY Duff (KoS letters, last week) is completely mistaken in his belief that a wish to leave the EU is based on some sort of nostalgia for the Empire, as it is hardly likely that such leading figures in the Labour Party as Clement Attlee, Hugh Gaitskill, Peter Shore, Tony Benn and Michael Foot would have based their opposition to the organisation on such a motive.

The reason I have been an activist against membership for over 40 years is that I am aware that the architects of the European project, Monnet and Schuman, deliberately intended that it be undemocratic, giving power to unelected bureaucrats, not the representatives of the people. That it is now falling apart is due in no small measure to this canker at its heart.

Mr Duff is clearly unable to accept the democratic choice of the British people and continues to fight a battle which has been decisively lost. Perhaps he might devote his energies to a cause which has a better chance of success, such as getting the World Cup match between England and Iceland replayed.

Colin Bullen,
Tonbridge

Duff's letter of the week guff

WELL, Ray Duff must be feeling very pleased with himself for getting letter of the week (Kos, last week) for yet another of his 'remoaning lectures' to us 'Brexiteers'. It's a pity the content didn't live up to the billing.

For a start it's somewhat disingenuous of him to cite a poll submitted before the referendum to support his utterly threadbare argument that the referendum was not legitimate, when he claimed in a previous letter the referendum was 'only advisory'.

He's clutching at straws anywhere he can find them to rubbish the result for no other reason than the Remain camp lost.

He seeks to talk down this country by reference to a book written by a person whose conclusion has to be challenged.

Exploding the 'myth of British exceptionalism'?

It's not a myth. Britain is an exceptional country. We may be small in geographical terms, but our influence throughout the world is huge – absolutely unrivalled and yes, despite all the rhetoric from 'doom mongers' like him, the UK will eventually emerge an even stronger and more prosperous nation as a result of the referendum vote.

He really does need to give himself a reality check and stop living in the post referendum world of clinging desperately on to the forlorn hope that somehow the result is going to be reversed.

Reality check list:

If there is a parliamentary vote, the referendum result will be upheld; any legal challenges will fail; there will not be another referendum; Jeremy Corbyn will never, ever, be prime minister.

'Brexit' means exactly what it's meant to mean – we've voted to leave the EU and eventually we'll be out.

Christopher Hudson-Gool,
Maidstone

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Seaside town folk all 'swear and tattooed'

I READ with great interest Tom Pyman's piece in last week's KoS about the gentrification of coastal towns.

I myself am a DfL (Down from Londoner) and have lived in Ramsgate for the last five years and I feel that bringing ageing coastal towns into the 21st century can only be for the good.

The council certainly don"t want to spend a penny on anything and seems to use any excuse not to. When I moved here to live it was a bit of a shock to see the same type of people; men in their 50s and over with bald heads, tattoos, earrings either drunk or high on cannabis; all of them acting like they're some type of hard man. Women... not much better.

As for the teenager, the girls – I think EastEnders and The Only Way Is Essex has a lot to answer for. The teenage boys are feral, with baseball hats too small for their heads and wearing the same hat back to front.

A combination of Primark, Sports Direct and Peacocks clothing really doesn't work.

Most of that ilk smell of BO or drugs and every other word is the F word or 'you give me bruv?'.

And all of these people seem to have the same dog of choice – a Staff. Maybe some of the readers can still recognise some of these people but I have noticed things do seem to be getting better very slowly.

DfLs seem to bring a change with them and not always for the good. I think it's when they don't want to integrate with the locals that it all goes wrong, but that works both ways as well. I feel instead of looking to blame DfLs you should be holding the council and the MPs to account because the coastal towns had problems long before the DfLs came to town.

Micky Wright
Ramsgate

Wriggling like a fish on the hook

I SEE that DR Hedges (KoS letters, last week) would prefer the simple 'government by the will of the people', turned into something more complex, so that like the law, it can be manipulated and twisted to suit individuals.

In other words, he believes some people are more equal than others.

As for Ray Duff, he wriggles like a fish on a hook. Despite all the Brexit good news he still thinks we're not good enough, still thinks we should give control of our country over to 27 others, still thinks the EU is an amazing deal despite the evidence to the contrary.

If he loves it all so much why doesn't he move to Calais, Cologne, or somewhere in Greece?

He could live in heavenly bliss.

Two surrender monkeys with no pride in their country, no belief in its people and not willing to make any effort to stand up for its values. Thank God for Nigel Farage!

Phil Granger,
West Malling

Grammars are not way forward

COLIN Bullen sets out exactly the problem with selective education in his analogy about choosing the first eleven in school football teams (KoS letters, last week).

That's fine for the academically gifted, but what about the rest?

We are too obsessed with academic achievement and not enough with developing a wider range of technical, practical, performance and artistic skills, which a selective system based on academic attainment regards as 'failure'.

Instead of going back to a system that failed many and increased social mobility for a few, we need to invest in the wide range of skills and talents which the country needs.

Philip Allen,
Ramsgate

Unis reassure

WE are immensely proud of our international students and pleased that Julian Brazier recognises the economic and cultural benefits they bring to the region.

We also agree with him that international students must comply with the UK Home Office's visa requirements and do not condone any abuse of these regulations.

Both universities have systems in place to ensure compliance with the Home Office regulations. We ensure that the Home Office is aware when students finish and are required to leave the country.

Julia Goodfellow, VC University of Kent & Rama Thirunamachandran, VC, Canterbury Christ Church University

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AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent



Mount Ephraim Gardens

by **Brian Summers from Faversham**

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29 December, 2016 • Quote: NY12-KOS

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INCLUDED: Escorted return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Amsterdam OR return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 4-night full board plus cruise sharing a twin-bed rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine and soft drinks served at lunch, dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Services of our Cruise Director on board





4 Star Madeira Carnival

By Air from Gatwick

22 February, 2017 • Quote: MC2-KOS

The Carnival of Madeira is known as one of the best in Europe. There are two main parades - the allegoric parade features thousands of participants in magnificent colourful costumes dancing to electrifying Samba music through the streets of the capital, Funchal. The second, called Trapalhao, features carnival goers in daring costumes and local caricatures. Included excursions take in the best of the island.

INCLUDED: Return flights Gatwick to Funchal with luggage • 7 nights stay at a 4-star hotel in Funchal • 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 7 dinners from the buffet, plus afternoon coffee and cake • Drinks included with lunch and dinner - aperitifs, local wine, beer, soft drinks and local spirits • Entertainment on 3 evenings • 2 half days and 1 full-day excursion • Seating for the carnival • Airport/hotel transfers in Madeira • Services of our representative in resort





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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



WRAPS OFF?: will October's Paris motor show unveil a Pulsar Nismo hot hatch based on this early concept?



THE ORIGINAL CROSSOVER: the Qashqai



SET TO CHANGE: the current Micra supermini

Nismo – Nissan's sporty gismo

BRAND UPDATE: Japanese marque could well spring a surprise or two at the forthcoming Paris show, notably with a hot hatch...

NISSAN'S stand at next month's Paris Motor Show will be dominated by a much-needed new Micra supermini.

The out-going car can trace its roots back nearly 14 years, so a re-think was imperative, but spyshots of the replacement have been inconclusive so we don't know whether it will be conventional or ape some features of Nissan's outlandish Juke crossover.

The new Micra might also share the stand with the much discussed Pulsar Nismo, in which Nissan's neat and well behaved family hatchback meets the Japanese brand's legendary tuning and motorsports division. The collision could produce a real halo car for the brand.

It will help broaden Nissan's market pitch too, which is currently biased towards the crossover sector it created so successfully with the Qashqai in 2007, essentially offering the market three cars in one: a family hatch with fashionable SUV/off-roader styling and MPV interior versatility.

It followed up with the similarly successful Juke, though I still wonder where versatility fitted into the design brief there since rear space, headroom and the boot are pretty poor; but maybe the new Juke will rectify that when it appears next year.



QASHQAI'S BIG BRO': the X-Trail completes Nissan's trio of crossovers

Much of the credit for the whole crossover revolution goes to the design and manufacturing expertise of Nissan's UK arm. Its plant at Sunderland produces the Qashqai and Juke, as well as the Note mini-MPV/hatchback, Leaf electric car and Q30 hatchback for Nissan's premium brand, Infiniti.

Other Nissan notables are the brand's classy X-Trail, the Qashqai and Juke's crossover big brother and easily worth a look as a rival to pricey German premium models, and the Navara pick-up.

The Navara has helped lead and shape the current boom in this class, which has far outgrown the construction site and farming markets – pick-ups are a common sight everywhere now.

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Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA Fabia range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 46.3 (6.1) to 67.3 (4.2); Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2) to 83.1 (3.4); Combined 58.9 (4.8) to 78.5 (3.6). CO_2 emissions for the ŠKODA Fabia range are 110 to 93 g/km. Standard EU test figures are for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

‘Crammable’ Fabia is way ahead

Skoda’s supermini is impressive enough as a leading supermini, but the capacious estate variant has no clear rivals, writes **Steve Loader...**

Skoda Fabia Estate SE L 1.4 TDI 105PS

Price:	from £18,155
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	SEAT Ibiza ST

SKODA likes being different, but it’s almost out on its own with the Skoda Fabia Estate.

While the standard hatchback is up with the best superminis, especially since the third generation Fabia arrived last year, the estate has little competition, apart from the Ibiza ST from fellow VW group brand SEAT.

While the Spaniard might look good though, it can’t compete with its newer and more capacious rival; the Fabia load-lugger is simply peerless.

Interior trimming could be more luxurious, but then Skoda might make equivalent superminis from VW and Audi look ridiculously expensive, and that won’t do for the VW Group hierarchy.

So Skoda eases the chafing of the corporate yoke by majoring on the ownership experience, thereby adhering to its advertising themes, like ‘Simply Clever’ and ‘Loved not Owned’

As a result, any Fabia is great to live with: everything is thoughtfully arranged and the estate boot is huge, with the intruding wheel arches turned into an asset by the creation of large bins behind them and trays on the top.







Total boot space is 530 litres – 1,395 with seats folded – versus the Ibiza ST’s 430/1164, and even looks impressive against the 610/1,740 of Skoda’s spacious Octavia, two sectors higher up the market.

We put the Fabia Estate to the test with a weekend’s camping and found that little of the required kit had to be carried in the car’s seated area; a feat for a car on this scale.

OK, don’t get too excited about driving the Fabia: it’s capable and comfortable, but not chuckable, and there’s no sign yet of an almost inevitable sporting vRS model.

So Fabia buyers, whether it be the already roomy hatchback (from £10,750) or the estate (from £12,630) are chiefly opting for space, versatility and practicality, which then turns engine choice into a lengthy debate.

There’s an asthmatic 60 or 75bhp three-cylinder 1.0-litre petrol that catches the eye on price, but will struggle if you are expecting to use the estate’s space.

I’m also sceptical about the three-pot 1.4 diesel versions with 90 or 104bhp. The test car had the higher output unit and offers the estate good lugging power and economy (76.4mpg combined) with low tax-exempt CO2 emissions (97g/km), but it’s pricey and feels weighty and wallowy.

We come then to the star option: a four-pot turbocharged 1.2-litre with 90 or 110bhp: it brings the Fabia to life to drive, has the necessary pulling power, still offers up to 60.1mpg (combined), and is attractively priced from £13,600 for the hatchback.

An equivalently specc’d diesel version starts at £15,600, so the 1.2 turbo’s £2,000 saving can offset its slightly higher fuel consumption... and it’s definitely nicer to drive.



Pulsar Range: URBAN 36.7-68.9mpg (7.7-4.1L/100km), EXTRA URBAN 58.8-85.6 mpg (4.8-3.3L/100km), COMBINED 47.9-78.5mpg (5.9-3.6 L/100km); CO_2 emissions 138-94g/km.

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Teaching Assistants

Salary £14,277 - £16,799 (pro rata)
(equal to £8,617 to £10,139 pa depending on experience)

27.08 hours per week, worked over 5 days, term time only

We are seeking to appoint to two posts that have become available to support pupils, who have a range of learning needs, both in our intervention unit and in mainstream classes. Experience in early-years reading skills, literacy and phonics would be an advantage.

Applicants should have the necessary skills to support in mainstream classes, in small groups or on an individual basis. Candidates would be expected to have good literacy and numeracy skills, and, as part of the interview, may be asked to demonstrate their skills in supporting pupils.

Part time Catering Assistant

Hourly rate: £7.40 - £7.83

10 hours per week - 39 weeks per year 12.00 – 2.00pm daily

Food preparation/cooking experience and a basic food hygiene certificate preferred, but if you have a positive attitude, good practical skills and are willing to work, we will teach you.

Ofsted 2012 - Outstanding

Recruitment packs are available from Westlands School or online (www.westlands.org.uk). Please note that we cannot accept CVs without an application form. Applicants should include a letter of application detailing how they meet the requirements of the person specification.

Closing date: Wednesday 21 September 2016 at noon.

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Contact Details

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA
Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732
Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS



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SELL anything WITH SMALL ADS

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003:
Application for Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that AJG Hospitality Ltd trading as Fuggles Beer Cafe of 28 Grosvenor Road, TN1 2AP has applied to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council for the GRANT of a premises licence for the sale and supply of alcohol on or off the premises including the provision of recorded music between the hours of 1100 and 2300 (2230 Sunday) for the premises situated at 165 High Street, Tonbridge, TN9 1BX

Any person wishing to submit representations about the proposals should make them in writing to: Licensing Services, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4LZ giving in detail the grounds of objection by 04/10/2016

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary of conviction for the offence is £5000.

Goods Vehicle
Operator's Licence

David Armstrong trading as Armstrong Haulage of 11 Medway Road, Crayford, Dartford, Kent DA1 4PN is applying to change an existing licence as follows To keep an extra 1 goods vehicles and1 trailers at the operating centre at Unit 4 Burgess Business Park, Crabtree Manor Way South, Kent, DA17 6 AD.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

Kent and Medway NHS
NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

Annual General Meeting
Thursday 29 September 2016

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, which provides mental health and a range of other services to the people of Kent and Medway, will be holding its AGM at Trust headquarters:

Farm Villa, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, Kent ME16 9PH

Refreshments from 4.00pm with a start of 4.30pm.

The meeting will include a review of the past year, current focus and a financial report.

Anyone wishing to attend must register, places are limited.

To confirm your attendance email **communications@kmpt.nhs.uk or call 01622 724100.**

Goods Vehicle
Operator's Licence

Gurpreet Singh Shergill trading as London Trucking Ltd of 38 Hillside Road, Crayford, Kent DA1 3NS is applying for a licence to use Tarmac Limited, Watery Lane, Westwell, Ashford, Kent TN25 4JJ as an operating centre for 3 goods vehicles and 0 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.



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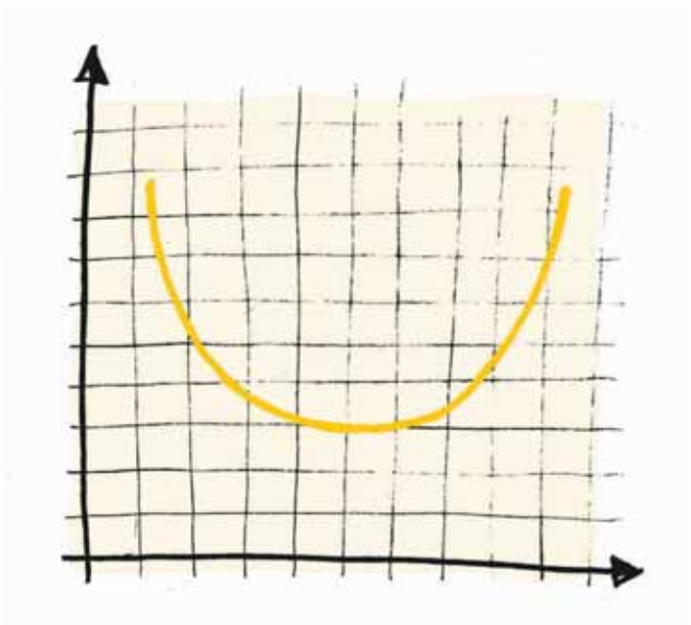
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*Source: home24.co.uk database March 2015



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*Source: GB TGI 2009 Q3 (April 2008 - March 2009)
**Source: The Wanted Ads STAGE 1. GFK NOP Base: all adults

Promotion dream over after defeat

Close but no cigar this season as Northants deliver heavy blow

Cricket

By Mark Pennell

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT'S slim chances of overhauling Division 2 leaders Essex and securing promotion evaporated this week after suffering their second defeat of the Specsavers County Championship campaign by 10 wickets to Northamptonshire in Beckenham.

Needing a fourth successive win to maintain pressure on their neighbours from across the Thames estuary, Kent capitulated inside three days to a Northamptonshire side still buoyed from winning last month's NatWest T20 Blast title.

After posting a lacklustre 230 in their first innings, the visitors then piled on 384 – with Ben Duckett hitting 208 – to take a commanding lead. Needing a strong batting performance in the second innings, Kent capitulated, ending all out for 184 and leaving Northants a simple run chase which they achieved without losing a wicket.

Kent's Hardus Viljoen said: "Whatever the outcome in the final match against Essex, maybe promotion wasn't meant for us this year but we'll see what happens next summer.

"I'd never write us off as a team and never forget that the opposing side are always allowed to play good cricket sometimes. This was one of those games when we weren't at our best and the overcast conditions on the first morning played a massive role in the outcome of the game.

"If you take Ben Duckett's incredible knock out of the game we might have shaped up quite well. Without his 208 we'd have bowled them out for 170-odd."



BLOW: Kent's Darren Stevens hit by disappointment again after county's championship campaign fizzles out Pictures: ADY KERRY

To hammer home the agony of the defeat, normally the top two clubs in Division Two rise up the ranks. But a change this year as the leagues are restructured meant just the top team moved on up.

Kent's final County Championship match of the season, against Essex, which had been shaping up to be one of the most anticipated clashes of the season with both teams in contention for promotion, will now be a rather more mundane affair. It starts in Canterbury on September 20.

Rio delight for cyclist Megan as she takes gold

Paralympics

MEGAN Giglia has won Great Britain's first medal at the Rio Paralympics, taking gold in the C1-3 individual pursuit.

The 31-year-old, from Mersham, near Ashford, beat American Jamie Whitmore on Thursday's opening day of action, catching up with her at the 1,777 yards mark resulting in an automatic win.

The inspirational cyclist suffered a stroke in 2013, which left her with a brain haemorrhage and paralysis to the right side of her body.

The former multi-sports coach used cycling as part of her recovery, and after making an impression at a British Cycling talent identification event was accepted into the paralympic development programme in May 2014. Speaking of her win on Thursday, the champion said: "It hasn't sunk in yet.



INSPIRATION: Megan Giglia

"I wouldn't be here without my team-mates, and my back-up team behind me.

"I didn't think I would make it to Rio and I thought it was a bit ambitious but I wanted to give it a go."

The cyclist is dedicating each event she competes in to individuals and families who are dealing with the after effects of a stroke.

Before her race, she posted a picture of schoolboy Alasdair Rowan on social media site Instagram, dedicating her victory to him.

Delighted sister Annie Giglia, from Folkestone, told KoS: "I'm unbelievably proud of all what Megan has achieved.

"As soon as she started racing I felt myself well up thinking what she has been through. She is an inspiration to stroke survivors and for people to stop taking life for granted."

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Jamie Weir** on **01233 653481**

'Teams no longer come here expecting to win'

GILLINGHAM boss Justin Edinburgh says the perception of his team has changed since he took over the reins – and he has no intention of letting that psychological advantage slip.

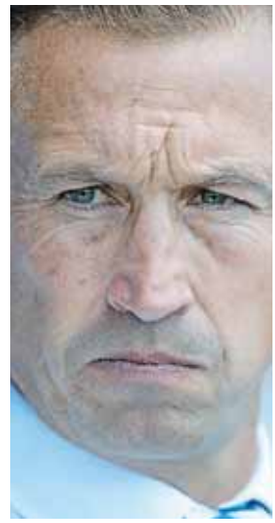
The Gills went into this weekend perched on the edge of the play-off spots prior to a home clash with Bradford.

After a strong showing last season, and an encouraging start in this, Edinburgh says it is ushering in a new culture.

"I want to raise expectations," he explains, "I want us to keep raising the bar, and we've done that since I took over. I wouldn't want us to be the underdogs every week.

"I want more than that, the players want more than that, and I'm sure every Gillingham fan is the same. That's testament to the work we've done at the club over the past year-and-a-half. This is a mark of respect, teams coming here and asking us to break them down.

"What we have to realise is that teams don't come to Gillingham expecting to win games anymore."



ATTITUDE: Justin Edinburgh



TARGET: Wembley dreams in the distance for our teams

Clubs eye glory as FA Cup draw is made

THERE will be a break from league campaigns next weekend, as a number of our top non-league sides resume their bid for a money-spinning run in the FA Cup.

The draw for the second round was made this week, with all fixtures due to take place next Saturday.

Tonbridge Angels thrashed Ascot 7-0 in their first round replay this week, representing their biggest ever cup win margin.

The games featuring Kent clubs include: Hythe Town v Walton Casuals, Wingate & Finchley v Tonbridge Angels, Chelmsford City v Dartford, Hemel Hempstead Town v Herne Bay, Ebbsfleet United v Sudbury, Folkestone Invicta v Waltham Forest, Faversham v Hitchin and Margate v Biggleswade Town.

Premier cash funds floodlights

SOUTHERN Counties side Snodland Town will officially flick the switch on their £48,000 set of new floodlights prior to a friendly against a Maidstone United XI next Monday, September 19.

A grant of £33,570 from the Premier League though the Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF) allowed the project to get the go-ahead, and allowed the club to rise up the non-league pyramid.

The lights go on at 7.30pm at the Potyns Sports Field in Snodland, with kick off at 7.45pm.

Funded with £5.2m each year from the Premier League, the FSIF is the country's largest provider of grants towards projects that help improve the comfort and safety of lower league football grounds in both the professional and amateur game.

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